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## Page 17 Taste of the Bird's Nest

The restaurant in the National Stadium is serving up what Olympic gold medalists ate.



## Pages 20-21 Sunflower sea in the 'burbs

Take in the striking sight of these big yellow flowers against a backdrop of the capital's canyons and mountains.

# Reviving the classical spirit

Seeing Chinese classical music and culture on display at the opening ceremony of the Beijing Olympics reminded many of the millennia of grand traditions now being lost.

But two years later, those traditions may be getting a second chance.

At the vanguard of the new fashion is Ha Hui, whose performances of ceremonial music are bringing classical songs and clothes back into the 21st century.

Ha's art is about more than just music – it touches the core of Chinese philosophy.

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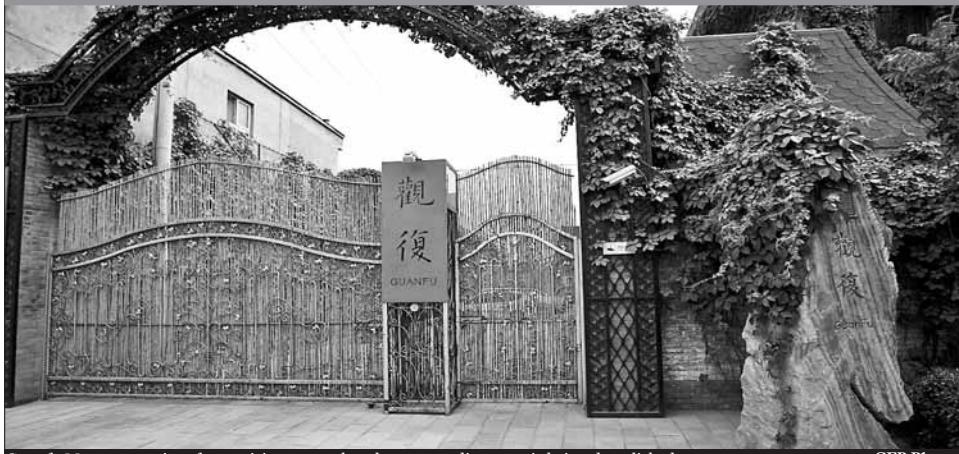
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# Struggling private museums face demolition, closure

By Chu Meng

There are more than 2,000 private museums in the country. But most are unable to operate on their own due to a shortage of government support: either in favorable regulations or money.

Last week, the famous private Guanfu Antique Museum was brought up for demolition. Again.



Guanfu Museum receives fewer visitors now that the surrounding area is being demolished.

CFP Photos

Ma Weidu, a writer and collector, opened Guanfu Museum in 1996.

In the 14 years since, the country's first private-run museum has been forced to relocate three times. Guanfu is about to start the search for a fourth new home because its current site is slated for demolition as part of a Dashanzi development project.

"I hope to find a new, convenient location in a pleasant environment before demolition. It can stay here for the next three to five years until the new site is ready," Ma said, noting he has no intention of obstructing the government's development plan.

A Guanfu security guard who refused to be named said Wednesday that the museum will relocate by the end of the year, but Ma denied this.

## Private-run problems

The 6,000-square-meter Guanfu Museum has been a home to cultural relics for 16 years.

People come as much to see its 1,000 extraordinary pieces dating back to the late Ming and Qing dynasties as to see its founder Ma Weidu, a well-known collector.

Ma is one of the few private museum owners to have such support, an achievement due in no small part to his charisma and extensive social network. Sound management and a marketing campaign that includes regular exhibitions and cultural activities have made Guanfu the country's only viable private-run museum.

But for most private museum owners, simply keeping the lights running is a daunting task.

"Private museums on the Chinese mainland are facing a long, cold winter," said Ma Zishu, former vice director of the State Administration of Cultural Heritage.

Fund shortage has forced private museums across the country to close.

Such was the case at Story of Movie Museum, China's first private museum devoted to the history of film. Founded early this year by former CCTV talk show host and celebrity Cui Yongyuan, the 650-square-meter museum housed hundreds of copies of the *Story of Movie*, a documentary project Cui began in early 2003 to preserve early Chinese film.

Cui kept the doors up with the support of his business contacts. The real estate developer allowed Cui permanent free use of the



Ma Weidu counts antique furniture in the Guanfu Museum warehouse.

two-story building.

But even so, running the museum was impossible. Cui told *China Daily* that the monthly operational costs of the site were about 40,000 yuan.

Many of the private museums determined to survive are relocating to Beijing's outskirts and basements to slash operational costs, *China Daily* reported.

## No support

Several museums' curators said ticket sales alone cannot cover operational costs, even with a tax exemption on those sales.

"We actually are engaged in a public welfare project. We hope to make full use of our private collections to make a contribution to society. But the shortage of funds means many private-run museums will eventually be forced to close," Cui said.

Ma Zishu said that such museums in other countries come under the management of social organizations or foundations that help raise the necessary funds, and that the socialization of private museums is a trend.

While China did have a private museum founded in 1905 in Nantong, Jiangsu Province, the boom really began in 1997 when four Beijingers received museum licenses from the local authorities.

The country has 386 registered private museums, according to official statistics. At least 1,700 others remain unregistered.

Of Beijing's first four private museums, only the Guanfu Art Museum is still in operation.

In February, the State Council issued its Statute on Museum Management, a regulation stating that "individuals, legal persons, and other organizations are encouraged to

open and run museums."

That may sound good, but no actual laws have been passed that could benefit private museums.

Private museums complement state-run museums, Ma Weidu said.

"They help keep alive the memory of certain cultural aspects of a city that the state museums may ignore. Private museums may not yield economic returns in the short term, but they contribute immensely to the wealth and diversity of local culture," he said.

Some museums, founded by large corporations, are nonprofit institutions opened as part of their branding strategies. Others do profit, but the main motivation is to keep the museum running.

Yushengtang Traditional Chinese Medicine Museum, another licensed private museum, moved from the downtown area to north of North Sixth Ring Road in May seeking to cut costs.

While the drugstore, herbal medicine shop and antique collection firm has survived four centuries since the Qing Dynasty (1616-1911), the 11-year-old private museum founded in 1999 to exhibit medical instruments, books and ancient medicines is struggling.

"Many of the private museums are established simply because the founders want to share their passion with others. None of us thought about making a profit," Bai Yang, director of the museum, said.

Bai said Yushengtang has established a close cooperation with the Beijing Municipal Government to assist in cultural exchange events by sending pieces from its collection abroad.

# Gov still limping on anti-tobacco promise

By Han Manman

Half-hearted efforts to curb tobacco use have failed to deter the nation's 300 million smokers.

With no legislation and a century-strong tradition of tobacco use, few people are willing to change their habits, according to a report released by the Center for Disease Control (CDC) Tuesday.

The country once committed itself to banning smoking in indoor venues by January 9 next year, part of a WHO-backed global anti-tobacco treaty, but local experts say the government is likely to blow that deadline.

A survey of 13,000 people earlier this year found no significant decrease in the smoking rate since 2002, the CDC reported.

The survey found that over half of all Chinese men smoked, compared to 2.4 percent of women. Most of the country's 300 million adult smokers started before age 20, and over 72 percent of nonsmokers are regularly exposed to second-hand smoke.

The survey also found that only one quarter of those polled believed that smoking tobacco increased the risk of cancer.

Though China pledged to make indoor public spaces, workplaces and public transportation smoke-free by early next year, 63 percent of those surveyed said they had seen people smoking in public places or at work during the last 30 days.

"There has been no substantial improvement in the smoking rate or exposure to secondhand smoke," said Yang Gonghuan, deputy director of the CDC.

But the government has put in some effort.

During the past several years, it banned tobacco advertisements from radio, television and newspapers, and outlawed smoking on airplanes.

This May, it also banned smoking at the Ministry of Health's own 19-story office building in Beijing, the first central government agency to prohibit indoor smoking.

Weeks ago, authorities also instructed kindergartens and elementary, secondary and vocational schools to ban smoking on campus and ban teachers from lighting up in front of students.

But authorities are losing the fight against a habit that penetrates every corner of society. Half of all male doctors smoke, tobacco companies sponsor schools and one wedding dinner ritual requires the bride to light cigarettes for each male guest.

With no national-level legislation to punish people who smoke in public spaces, the government ban is meaningless, experts said.

But Nanchang may become a role model in a nation otherwise comfortable with this failure. A new draft law may make it the first city to have local legislation banning smoking in public venues and workplaces.

Yang said the draft will be submitted to the country's legislative department for approval. The draft would guarantee 100-percent smoke-free public venues and workplaces by using punishment to enforce the ban.

He said the country is not yet ready to pass legislation at the national legislature, and that upper government is leaving the initial push up to each locality.

"When local governments and legislatures support a smoking ban, then people will finally be able to enjoy a smoke-free environment," he said.

# Danxia a world heritage, but how to protect it?

By Zhang Dongya

An August 2 vote at the World Heritage Conference in Brazil made China's Danxia a new world heritage site.

With 40 world heritage sites, China ranks third in the world. Its first world heritage site was recognized in 1987, the year after the country became a signatory in the Convention concerning the Protection of World Cultural and Natural Heritage.

There are more than 200 domestic sites vying to be next on the list. Some 60 have been short-listed for submission, 35 of which – including West Lake in Hangzhou – are already preparing for next year's annual bid.

## Danxia wins

It was 5 am, August 2 – Beijing time.

The UNESCO World Heritage Committee had just started the meeting to decide whether "China Danxia Landform" would become the latest addition to the World Heritage List at the 34th conference in Brasilia, capital of Brazil.

Danxia is the general name for six geologically and geographically related land areas: Chishui in Guizhou, Taining in Fujian, Langshan Mountain in Hunan, Danxia Mountain in Guangdong, Longhu Mountain in Jiangxi and Jiangle Mountain in Zhejiang.

Twenty of the 21 member countries present at the meeting agreed that Danxia needed to be protected.

"The only objection was to the name 'Danxia' and to China's late submission of the application, which were hardly crippling issues," said Harry Zhang, a representative at the Office of Application for World Heritage.

The unique geomorphology is called "red cliff" by scholars abroad. In China, it uses the more romantic name "Danxia," or red clouds.

"Most people in other countries understand the name after explanation. The name lets us keep this feature rooted in south-east China," Zhang said.

Danxia meets two of the most important criteria for natural heritage: it is a remarkable natural phenomenon and an area of exceptional natural beauty, and it is an outstanding example of a major stage in the Earth's history that embeds the record of life in a significant ongoing geological process.

The ancient architectural complex of the Shaolin Temple, called "The Center of Heaven and Earth" in Dengfeng, Henan Province, was also included in the World Culture Heritage list. The last conference had deferred its ruling, but approved it this year under a new name.

## More than a label

The success of Danxia gave six provinces reason to celebrate.

Zhejiang Province proclaimed that Jiangle Mountain broke an invisible barrier by becoming its first world heritage. The province ambitiously hopes to submit its



Henan people celebrate after their Shaolin Temple was included on the UNESCO World Heritage list.

CFP Photos



Six Danxia sites won recognition from UNESCO, and are expected to see a boom in tourism.



The local government organized events to redirect people's enthusiasm to support world heritage sites.

Photo provided by danxiashan.org.cn

West Lake and a local stretch of the Grand Canal to UNESCO.

"Our local government used 10 to 20 years to prepare for the Danxia application. It doesn't matter whether they did it to promote tourism or protect our cultural resources, the World Heritage label alone is already important for the development of local tourism," said Ma Xiaolong, director

of the Institute of Regional Tourism Planning and Development at China Tourism Academy.

Some were anticipating a new flow of UNESCO money, but the organization only supports world heritage sites that are in danger because their host countries cannot protect them, the curator of Fudan University's library Ge Jianxiong said.

But the label may be able to generate cash on its own.

The ancient city of Pingyao in Shanxi Province raked in 75 million yuan from admissions in 2008 after it was listed as a world heritage: 10 years ago, it earned 1 million yuan on its admissions. Income generated from tourism in the province grew from 13 million yuan in 1997 to 670 million yuan in 2008.

Peng Hua, group leader of the China delegation for world heritage application, said it cost more than 1 billion yuan to prepare the Danxia application. Before a site can be considered for world heritage, it must have infrastructural facilities, such as a library, customer center and comprehensive administration system.

While many bemoaned the expense, Peng said it was "worth" it to restore the tourism spots.

"Our country has rich natural and cultural resources, and there are far too many sites left waiting for world heritage," Ma said. Which get selected may depend more on local government financing than on their innate value.

Zhangye in Gansu Province hoped to submit its own Danxia landscape, but the province withdrew its application due to a shortage of funds.

Media reported that Xinning County in Hunan Province spent more than 400 million yuan to prepare Langshan Mountain for its submission, even though the government generated only 200 million in revenue in 2008.

## After world heritage

Many worry that tickets to the six Danxia sites will become more expensive to match the

change in status.

Most world heritage sites raise their admission fees. Huangshan Mountain, in Anhui Province, Zhangjiajie in Hunan Province and Jiuzhaigou in Sichuan Province all raised their admission tickets to more than 200 yuan after becoming heritage sites.

Peng said the price hike was influenced by China's tourism management, which relies on tourism income to support heritage protection.

"China has a large population base, and these scene sites are trampled by millions after they are recognized. By raising the prices they can limit the number of people coming in," Ma Xiaolong said.

"In the long run, it may be better for related departments to hold public hearings to collect opinions on prices rather than allowing the developers and contractors run the show," Ma said.

Another problem is overdevelopment. The management of Zhangjiajie was issued a stern warning by UNESCO when it began erecting so many hotels that it brought damage to the scenic area.

Many local governments have no clue how to go about protecting their heritage. They turn instead to tourism and profits, not thinking about the potential for long-term damage.

Peng said the Danxia sites would adopt a "peripheral development." A special organization will be established to manage all six sites, preserving the "non-development" areas for permanent protection and research. Tourism will be limited to a small area around the scenic spots, Peng said.

# Making it happen

## Doctor drops hospital salary to serve African mission



Liu serves as a mentor to the limited local medical staff.

**L**iu speaks with excitement and a big grin as he describes his years as a volunteer doctor in Africa.

It would be easy to discount the 34-year-old doctor's stories, but his thoroughly tanned skin stands out like a badge marking his years of service.

Liu spoke Saturday at the Ullens Center for Contemporary Art about his mission to Africa, where he was performing nine to 12 surgeries per day.

"The easiest job was administering anesthetic. That should tell you how many more difficult tasks I had to learn to deal with," Liu says.

After graduating in 2001, Liu went to work at Taipei Veterans General Hospital. Despite a high salary, he was not satisfied with his life.

"I was sick of the routine. Every day there was a morning meeting, a couple of surgeries and then an afternoon of explaining everything to the patients," he says. "The operating room in the department of gynecology and obstetrics on Floor 8 was the only one with a window. I spent every day wondering what was happening outside."

Those wonders ended the day he bought the tour book *Istanbul to Katmandu* at Page One Bookstore in Taipei. He resigned from the hospital and hopped a train to Istanbul from Shanghai.

It was April 2007 when Liu began his nine-month journey through Turkey, Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan, India and the Chinese mainland.

He had planned to return to work at the hospital after his journey, but the desperate conditions he saw prompted a change of plans.

"During those nine months, everything went smooth in my old department," he says. "That's when I realized the hospital didn't depend on me. I wanted to go and work somewhere where my help would be essential."

Having invested 12 years in the pursuit of medicine, Liu had no interest in abandoning his calling. Instead, he applied to be a part of MSF through its Hong Kong office.

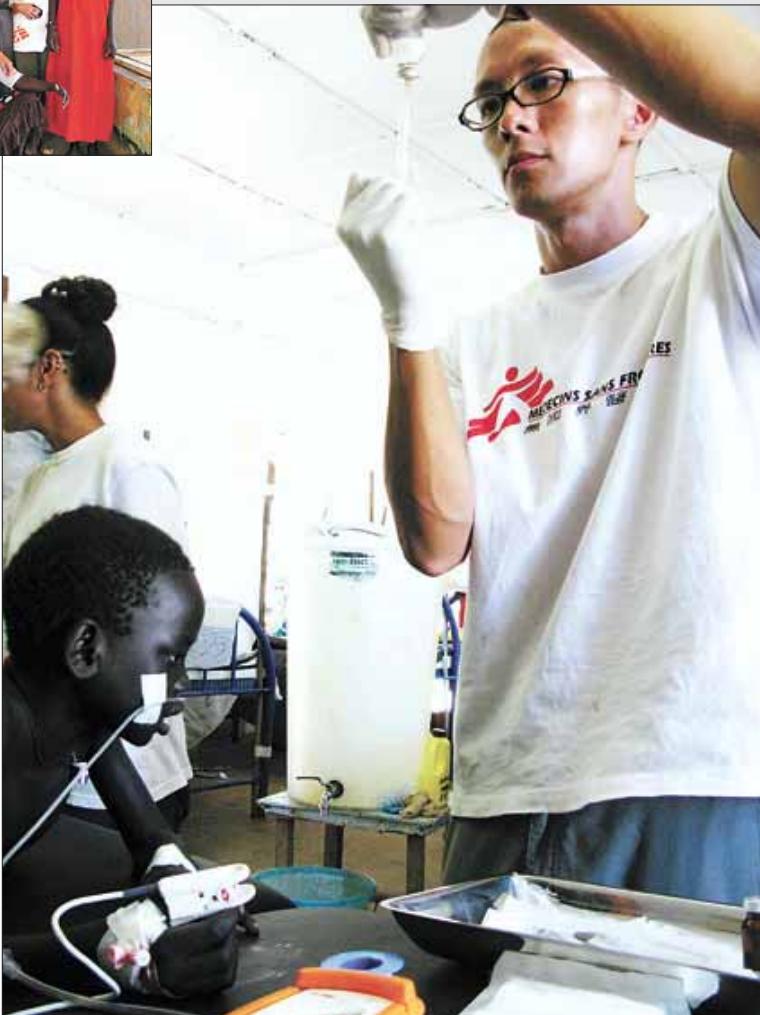
Since 1971, MSF has provided emergency humanitarian

By He Jianwei

Liu Chen-kun, an anesthesiologist and graduate of China Medical University in Taichung, Taiwan Province, joined Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) in 2008.

For the next two years, Liu worked as a volunteer at six medical missions that put him to work in the most desperate regions in southern Sudan, Sierra Leone, the Democratic Republic of Congo and the Central African Republic.

Besides providing medical care for patients who lived with few or no doctors, he also served as a mentor for what little local medical staff existed.



Liu Chen-kun (right) works as an anesthesiologist at MSF's mission in southern Sudan.

Photos provided by Liu Chen-kun

aid to people in danger in some 70 countries. The organization has two offices in China: one in Hong Kong and another in Guangzhou.

After several rounds of inter-

"My task was to work through the backlog of surgeries as quickly as possible," he says.

The first surgery he performed was a caesarian operation. The operating room had no ceiling

It was one of three surgeries Liu performed on his first day.

"I'm sure MSF was expecting me to quit because the conditions were so terrible. I heard they had even lined up a replacement. But I stuck it out," he says.

It took one month before he had the hospital on the right track.

Under Liu's guidance, the former slogan for the Aweil mission, "Aweil Will Survive," became "Aweil Will Make it Happen."

Aside from administering anesthetic, Liu also created a system for sterilizing instruments and designed a new floor plan for the hospital.

Liu moved on to Sierra Leone in February 2008, a seven-month stay during which he would help local doctors

**“**  
When you see war, you realize how stupid it really is. You may think you are tough when you are swinging around a weapon, but once you get hit by a bullet you end up like a lame dog.  
**”**

views over three months, Liu became the second doctor from Taiwan to be accepted into MSF. He set out on his first mission to Aweil, a town in southern Sudan, in September 2008.

When he arrived, the town had already gone five months without a surgeon.

lights or lamps – the only light was provided by a car's headlight.

"We were terrified when the mother's heart rate climbed to 170 beats while her blood pressure was only 70/50," he says, but in the end she delivered a healthy baby.

improve their skills.

He spent the first two weeks chatting with the local doctors and nurses. "I was a newcomer. If I started work as soon as I arrived there, they would not have listened to my advice at all," he says.

For many doctors who would like to join the MSF, language is a barrier. Communication at the missions is typically conducted in English or French.

It is also the reason so few mainland doctors attend the missions. Tu Zheng was the first and only doctor from the mainland admitted to MSF. The gynecologist's first mission was to Liberia in 2007, and she joined a second mission to Turkmenistan from February to September last year.

"In our curriculum, English is something we only briefly gloss over. The students who have some command of English usually lack professional knowledge about medicine. Because all MSF interviews are conducted in English, few mainland doctors can ever be posted," says Helen Zhao, liaison manager of MSF Guangzhou.

Liu agrees that language is an obstacle.

Before being sent to a mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Liu studied 30 hours of French. "I only knew basic greetings and the vocabulary related to anesthesia," he says.

As a doctor, his mission was to heal the wounded and rescue the dying. But as part of MSF, his job is to provide relief to the victims of disasters both natural and man-made.

When he arrived in Congo, he was called on to treat many victims of gunshot wound: both soldiers and civilians who had been shot in the war.

"When you see war, you realize how stupid it really is. You may think you are tough when you are swinging around a weapon, but once you get hit by a bullet you end up like a lame dog," Liu says, gesturing to an X-ray picture of a soldier's broken arm. Doctors were forced to amputate the arm to stop an advancing infection.

Liu often lamented his inability to save many patients.

One 13-year-old girl he treated had developed typhoid fever and the bacteria rose through her intestines. The food went directly from her mouth to her anus, and she soon died of malnutrition.

"It is always tortuous to decide whether to proceed with a surgery or give up – especially when the decision can bring a patient's life to an early termination," he says.

# A tale of two economic giants

## What does it mean now that China has overtaken Japan?

China rises, Japan stalls. The biggest news in global media this week was China officially overtaking Japan as the world's second largest economy. A *New York Times* writer gushed, "The milestone, though anticipated for some time, is the most striking evidence yet that China's ascendancy is for real."

But what's the real story behind those numbers?

Bloomberg reported Tuesday that China's second quarter gross domestic product (GDP) surpassed Japan's. The report cited Japanese cabinet officials saying that Japan's nominal GDP for the second quarter totaled \$1.288 trillion, less than China's \$1.337 trillion.

Japan's annual GDP is \$5.1 trillion, while China's is just under \$5 trillion.

Bloomberg said comparing the two countries is tricky. While China's output was larger in the fourth quarter of 2009, Japan's GDP rebounded to exceed China's in the first quarter of this year, according to Bloomberg data.

Different calculations paint different pictures of the situation. Using purchasing power parity calculations to adjust for exchange rate differences, China overtook Japan in 2001, according to the IMF.

China overtook the US last year as the biggest automobile market and Germany as the largest exporter. The nation is the world's No. 1 buyer of iron ore and copper and the second biggest importer of crude oil.



A Chinese worker works on a Lenovo LED production in Beijing.  
CFP Photo

### The third eye

## Still a developing country

China is still a developing country when judged by its per capita GDP.

According to the World Bank, China's per capita GDP was a bit more than \$3,600 in 2009, ranking 124th worldwide, whereas Japan's per capita GDP amounted to more than \$39,000.

The economic model of China "is still mainly based on subcontracting, providing labor-intensive segments for re-exportation," Diana Hochraich was quoted by French newspaper *La Tribune* as saying on Monday.

"Actually, China continues to import 70 percent of what it exports and it is mainly the foreign companies that export sophisticated products from

China," said Hochraich, an expert on the Asian economy who has worked with the Ministry of Economy for many years.

"China remains dependent on industrialized countries, both for value-added inputs and as a market for its products," she added.

According to Hochraich, China is still far from catching up with the US and Japan in terms of innovation. "Innovation is the result of cultural sedimentation through generations."

Improving the grade of production is not easy, Hochraich said. For China, to become the new laboratory in the world "requires conditions that are far from being met," she said.

(Xinhua News Agency)

### Japan's view

## Do the Japanese care?

The Wall Street Journal asked locals in Tokyo about the recent news regarding China's economy and found most people merely shrugged.

"It can't be helped," said Koichi Matsubara, 36, who works in real estate. "Business has been drifting overseas, our population is shrinking. We're a small island, and given the size of our country, we were perhaps at the top longer than expected. I think we will continue to lose ground."

Many people also believe that the fall is attributed to Japan's lack of fighting power

compared to the days following World War II. "Japan lost its momentum," said Kazuyoshi Ono, a 58-year-old former banker. "The thinking in the past was, 'If I work hard, the harder I work the more likely I'll succeed,' but we've lost that hungry spirit."

Ono said he believes that the work-hard philosophy still exists but is missing a competitive drive. He believes the cause is in the faltering education system and the sway of mass media.

Naoko Yokokawa, a 28-year-old finance worker, said she thinks Japan's

decade-long economic doldrums has become all too familiar among her peers.

"We've gotten used to it after 20 years of being stuck in an economic slump," she said.

Yokokawa said the lack of motivation at home becomes even more pronounced when she travels to nearby emerging powers like South Korea and Vietnam.

"When you walk around, you can sense that South Korea is so full of spirit. It's completely different from the sense of calm in Japan," she said. "They have power."

(By Huang Daohen)

# Court moves to solve foreign investment disputes

By Zhao Hongyi

On August 16, the China Supreme People's Court issued new regulations on foreign investment disputes to frame a basis for the settlement of cases involving foreign investments companies.

## Identify and solve disputes

"This document is a first draft of the first part of the regulations," said Sun Jun-gong, a spokesman for the Supreme Court. "More regulations will be written as we mediate disputes."

He said he hopes the regulations give local courts standard measures to use when settling the disputes — ones which will benefit all parties.

The regulations focus on conflicts involving foreign limited liability companies, including the effectiveness and legal consequences of equity transfer and anonymous investment.

In equity transfer cases, many investors use the time gaps between signing contracts and official approval for their own benefit. "The rules provide standard punishment for dishonest behavior," said Liu Guixiang, a

Supreme Court judge.

The new rules also specify various conditions for anonymous investment and nullify contracts where investors violate regulations or attempt to escape legal responsibility.

"Conflicts involving share transfer, anonymous investment and liquidation have seen a sharp increase, and the legal problems resulting from these cases can be extremely complicated," the court said in a statement.

## Guarding investment

Foreign investment and capital are still pouring into China, according to figures maintained by the Ministry of Commerce.

In July, the country absorbed \$6.92 billion (47 billion yuan) from the 2,082 foreign-invested companies that registered that month. During the first half of this year, it absorbed a total of \$58.4 billion (396 billion yuan) from 14,459 companies.

"The momentum is not stopping," said Liu Yajun, the ministry's director of foreign investment.

After three decades of reform, China is seeing new problems and disputes, Sun

Jungong said. "These will require our courts have more knowledge, experience and neutrality in settling the disputes and judging the cases."

According to the SPC statement, conflicts involving foreign investment companies accounted for about 20 percent of all foreign-related civil and commercial cases during the past two years.

The conflicts used to be solved by negotiation, arbitration and litigation. "But these are far from able to reach ideal resolutions," Sun said.

The courts are planning to release a new series of judicial interpretations of other issues like mergers disputes, swap conflicts and contract terminations to focus on how the law should be applied to conflicts involving foreign-invested companies on issues such as disbandment and liquidation.

"These conflicts are more complicated, requiring more of our judges who must analyze them and make decisions," Sun said.

"The end goal is to make things more convenient for both native and foreign investors to do business in China," he said.

## Market watch

### Disputes on the rise

China passed its first investment laws in 1979, opening the door to foreign joint ventures and investors.

In the three decades since, the government has been improving its investment environment through subsequent revisions to the Contract Law and Corporation Law. In 2001, when China joined the World Trade Organization, it began adopting the standard international economic and business laws.

For the most part, the government has fulfilled its promise to change and open. It has created a very stable economic, business and judicial environment for foreign investors, which

made China one of the top business partners worldwide.

The momentum of foreign investment has not slowed.

But disputes are becoming more and more common as increased interaction exposes holes in the existing laws and regulations. Many dishonest investors and their partners use these holes to their advantage, Liu said.

In equity transfer, contracts normally need approval from both local and central authorities. But on the market, share values can fluctuate dramatically between the two steps. Some parties have refused to fulfill their contracts or post-

poned submissions to boost their own benefits.

"The regulations say that once a contract is signed, you cannot decline to fulfill your end or withdraw," Liu said. "If you postpone the approval, the benefits must go to your partner."

Anonymous investors are also common in joint ventures. Chinese courts protect anonymous investors as long as they are accepted by other board members and do not violate Chinese law. "We won't protect the benefits of investors only in name," Liu said.

The change is intended to better protect the benefits of real investors.



Two women walk past placards for overseas companies in Shanghai. Foreign investment disputes are on the rise in recent years. IC Photo

### More A380 flights serving China travelers

By Huang Daohen

Passengers will be seeing more of the world's biggest aircraft this year as international airlines grab more of China's international market with regular flights abroad on Airbus' A380 superjumbo.

German airline Lufthansa will be the first European airline to offer A380 services from Frankfurt-Beijing starting August 25, Lufthansa's Beijing office said.

But before the A380 lands in

Beijing, Lufthansa is offering Chinese passengers an opportunity to try their hand at flying a simulated superjumbo, said Arved von zur Muhlen, managing director for Lufthansa China.

The company has placed a high-tech simulator at city hotspots like Yansha Mall, 3.3 Sanlitun, 798 Art Zone, Wangfujing Shopping Street and Solana Lifestyle Shopping Park, Muhlen said.

The simulators will be around

until September 4, and visitors will have a chance to win a free ticket on the A380's maiden flight to Frankfurt.

Lufthansa said the flight will depart three times per week on Mondays, Wednesday and Fridays. A380 flights are already open for booking, Muhlen said.

But the German airline was not the first international carrier to bring the A380 to China. Emirates, the Dubai-based international airline and largest buyer

of A380s, said in March that it would deploy the superjumbo on its daily flight to China starting August 1.

International airlines have depended heavily on the Chinese market for recovery, a Xinhua business critic said.

AirPlus International, a subsidiary of Lufthansa, said the company hopes to accelerate growth in China to offset losses suffered during the global economic downturn.

Expansion in China is a strategic priority, AirPlus president Patrick Diemer said. The company's objective for 2010 is to regain the 65 percent settlement volume it lost during the recession.

Domestic carriers are also planning superjumbo flights, with China Southern Airlines — the nation's largest airline by fleet size — having ordered five from Airbus.

China Southern Airlines will receive the aircraft in late 2011.

## Expert The industry is getting worse

Generally speaking, the disposable chopsticks industry has gotten worse in the last 10 years.

First, the usage amount of one-off chopsticks hasn't decreased despite the government advocating for its reduction in usage.

Second, although the administration has issued industry standards for disposable chopsticks, they are hard to enforce as the Quality and Technical Supervision Administration lacks effective supervision on disposable chopsticks companies, which are usually very small and located in remote mountainous areas.

Third, the long-term lack of a way to recycle disposable chopsticks has caused environmental pollution.

Although the seven ministries seem to be paying much more attention to disposable chopsticks, the newly released notice is empty talk since there are no specific regulations. It's weird that the Quality Monitoring Administration and the Industrial and Commercial Bureau, which should have spearheaded this mission, didn't participate at all.

Also, what will happen if restaurants use common chopsticks without or with substandard sterilization? It's apparent that the authorities are not sincere about addressing these problems.

— Dong Jinshi, secretary general of the International Food Packaging Association Beijing Office

# Fight against disposable chopsticks rises again

By Li Zhixin

China's Ministry of Commerce (MOC), along with the National Development and Reform Committee (NDRC), Ministry of Environmental Protection (MEP) and four other ministries, released a notice in June requiring local governments to carry out stricter restrictions on companies that make disposable chopsticks.

The notice said "production, circulation and recycling of disposable chopsticks should be more strictly supervised." The MOC and NDRC plan to establish a disposable chopsticks recycling program by setting up collection points at consumption areas.

The country is the manufacturing, consuming and exporting giant of disposable chopsticks. "China produces more than 1 million 20-foot equivalent units of disposable chopsticks every year, and about 40 percent of the industry's products are used domestically," said Qian Xiaoyu, vice president of the Chinese Forest Product Industrial Association.

In the last 10 years, several local governments in Shaanxi, Zhejiang and Henan provinces have launched campaigns to reduce the usage of one-off



For many, it's convenient to use disposable chopsticks while eating outside.

CFP Photo

chopsticks and to strengthen the recycling work, but the results have fallen short of their expectations. The ministry said Chinese people consume as many as 45 billion one-off chopsticks each year, equivalent to about 130 million

chopsticks per day. Nearly half of them do not get recycled.

Qian said three pairs of recycled chopsticks can be processed to make one postcard or one piece of paper, but 35 percent of Chinese people don't know how disposable chopsticks are recycled.

Disposable chopsticks are either made from wood or bamboo. Wooden chopsticks mainly come from Heilongjiang and Jilin provinces, while bamboo chopsticks are distributed from Jiangxi, Guangxi, Hunan and Zhejiang provinces.

## Comment

### Hygiene should be foremost concern

Usage of disposable chopsticks won't harm the environment as they are mass-produced from birch, poplar trees and other secondary forests, which grow fast and have no economic value. The foremost thing we should be concerned about regarding reusable chopsticks is

the hygiene problem, as the food industry lacks supervision.

— Li Tao, food editor

### Consumers still prefer one-off chopsticks

Many consumers don't want to use common chopsticks because they are doubtful that their sterilization procedures really comply with hygienic standards. What's more, con-

sumers have gotten used to using this free and convenient tableware for years, so time is needed to change their habits.

— Tang Gang, restaurant manager

### All disposable commodities should be banned

As far as I know, this is the third time the government has issued such a limitation. It

seems to me that great talent is being used in petty things when all seven ministries target disposable chopsticks as an evil. Why don't they formulate strict and concrete laws to curb the production of all disposable commodities instead of releasing a notice that they cannot enforce

— Li Xin, public servant

### Hard to ban

The industry provides more than 300,000 jobs for Chinese workers and it exports products to more than 20 countries, raking in about \$200 million every year, so it will be hard to replace.

— Lian Guang, president of the Wooden Chopsticks Trade Association

# Pure and pretty girls hard to find in China?

By Huang Daohen

There are more than 1.3 billion people in China, but movie director Zhang Yimou lamented recently that it was difficult to find a pure and simple-hearted girl in China today.

In order to find an actress to play Jing Qiu in his latest film, *Romance Under the Hawthorne Tree*, Zhang searched far and wide and interviewed more

than 10,000 young women.

"If you look at pictures taken in the 1960s or 1970s, you will see an aura of purity around every man or woman in those pictures," Zhang said at a press conference last week. "But that's a bygone quality that you hardly see in any young faces today."

Zhang joked that teens nowadays are uglier because beau-

tiful women choose to marry ugly but rich old men.

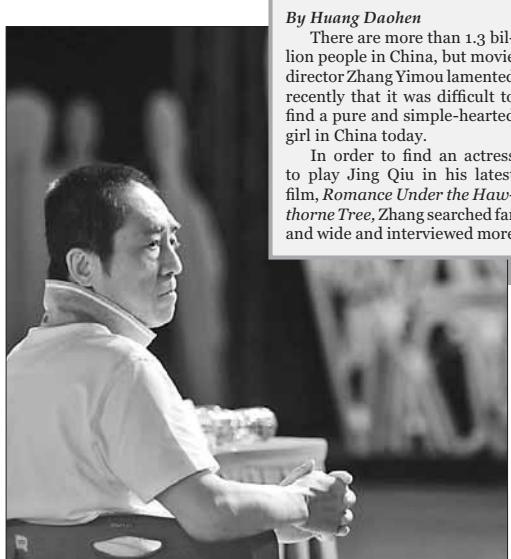
Other directors have come across the same problem. Wang Quanan said he was once in a pinch because he couldn't find an actress to star in his new film, *Bailuyuan*.

Wang eventually chose Li Meng, a Beijing college student, after looking at as many as 3,000 young women across

the country.

Zhang eventually settled on Zhou Dongyu, 17, a high school student from Shijiazhuang, Hebei Province.

Zhang and Wang's lamentations aroused a heated debate. Many say young people today are too open and their casual attitudes toward sex have made finding a "pure" actress "mission impossible."



Zhang Yimou says he is upset about the demise of "pure" girls.

## Comment

### Commercial influence erodes pure nature

Why have pure girls become such a rare breed? One should look at the current social environment. The 1990s generation is growing up in a society that has been affected by commercial and material concerns. They eat at McDonald's and KFC, watch American Idol and play online games. Unlike conservative girls in the 1960s and 1970s, they are more fashionable and materially oriented. This is why they are losing their nature.

Besides, in an increasingly

competitive society, young girls are encouraged to be more open and participate in all kinds of activities. It is understandable that one finds it difficult to find pure girls.

— Charles Zheng, art director

### Director's definition

What on earth is purity for a girl anyway? The film directors think purity means clean, big and bright eyes and silky skin.

Zhang might have been a competent film director once. But what talent and raw passion he had are nowhere to be found in his latest offerings.

Can we say a sophisticated girl that sleeps around is not pure, or even dirty? I don't think so. I think those who are kind and care about others are equally "pure."

— Jeff, college teacher

### Progress or regression?

Zhang and Wang's dilemma indicates a larger problem in China today: the younger generation does not seem to understand the meaning of pure love. Instead, some choose to become mistresses or have premarital sex.

Is this progress or regression?  
— Huang Ye, restaurant manager

# American couple adopts blind Chinese orphan

By Liang Meilan/Jacklyn Liu

Last week the Bethel Training Center for the Blind in Fangshan District saw its 13th blind orphan adopted this time, by a couple from Fort Wayne, Indiana.

The nine-year-old girl, Wang Chunyan, is going to be the American couple's fifth child. In their 30s, Rebekah and Ryan Hubley have three biological children and a four-year-old boy who was adopted from Haiti in May 2008.

Rebekah said she likes the "full time job" of being a mom and a freelance photographer as well as a teacher at Huntington University. "For me, going out of the house and doing some work is a relaxing break," she said.

What's special about the family is that three of their kids have vision problems. Their oldest biological daughter, nine-year-old Hannah, was born blind, and the child from Haiti is visually impaired. The experience of taking care of these disabled kids has prepared the couple for the adoption of Wang.

They got to know the girl in February 2009 from someone who adopted two blind girls from Bethel. After collecting information about the girl, the couple learned she fit perfectly into their family.

But the adoption process was not rushed. "Before we really got in touch with the girl, we first prepared ourselves and did the adoption paperwork that was required. When all these were done, we talked with her on Skype, telling her our intentions and cultivating a relationship," Rebekah said.

The whole process took one and half a years. Hou Meimei, Wang's "mom" in Bethel, said they opened special classes for Wang to learn corresponding courses in the US.

"Thanks to Bethel's consideration, we are not worried about transition issues. We believe Chunyan will soon take in the role of daughter," Rebekah said.

Unlike most charity houses for disabled kids, Bethel - a non-profit school founded by a French couple in 2003 - has unique methods of raising and educating blind orphans.

"We have a lot of foreign volunteers

who come regularly to be teachers in music, language, science and psychology, among other subjects," said Hou, who is also a teaching assistant, adding that the most important thing is teachers and "moms" don't force the kids to learn what they don't want to.

"The curriculum for each age group is diversified, which is seldom seen in other charity houses," she said. "The education concepts we use were introduced to us by many foreign experts who are also volunteers here."

"Though the kids are vision impaired, their behavior is normal and they even do better than 'normal' people in many aspects."

Jacklyn Liu, a 16-year-old volunteer from New York, was amazed when she first saw the blind kids.

"It was impossible for me to tell how they were different from other children except when I looked in their eyes" she said. "I was astonished that two of the children proudly played the piano. They are open and talkative."

"I will never forget the children making efforts to hold my hand to make sure I didn't crash into the walls," Liu said. "I came to Bethel to teach these orphans; instead, they've taught me."

Established seven years ago with three blind children by the French couple Guillaume and Delphine Gauvain, the center grew into a big family with 40 children and more than 50 staff members.

The children's dormitories have large bunk beds for those seven and above and cradle beds for toddlers. "We create this international environment with different age groups to teach the bigger children how to take care of the smaller ones," Hou said.

Leaving the orphanage can be hard. Hou recalled the story of a child who spent five years at the orphanage, starting when she was three months old. An American family adopted her, but the girl kept calling and saying she was living in a strange place. "The girl was too attached and refused to adapt to her new environment," Hou said, stressing that the first several months are crucial



Chunyan meets her new parents

Photo by Xie Fei

to the children and their new families.

The Hubley couple is doing all they can to make sure Chunyan adjusts to her new life. Chunyan is enrolled in a fine arts school, but her parents aren't letting her go just yet. "The top priority for us is to

really let the girl know that we love her. It will take time," Rebekah said.

Children in Bethel are constantly in need of medical help. Information about donations and volunteering can be found on the website bethelchina.org.

## Big-name European galleries use China's art expo as platform for new exposure

By Chu Meng

The 2010 Beijing International Art Expo, featuring high-end art pieces brought by hundreds of international and Chinese galleries, opened yesterday at the China World Trade Center.

The owner of Germany's Hagemann Gallery, famous for its classical European oil paintings, displayed the masterpiece "La Route de Verrières," by Alfred Sisley at 30 million yuan, it is the most valuable item at the Expo.

The son of the owner, Jan Hagemann, opened his family gallery's China branch in Beijing in 2006. Since, he has commanded high prices for his family's collection of classical and original Western oil paintings from the 17th to 19th century.

"The Beijing International Art Expo has proven to be a valuable platform for both world collectors and galleries," Hagemann said.

As faithful participants in every Chi-

nese art fair of the last four years, Hagemann knows such events are ideal for international collectors and galleries seeking to enter China's collection market.

The Hagemann family became famous in Germany thanks to Jan's father's Flemish school and French impressionist collections. Most collections feature works from world famous artists such as Rubens Peter Paul, Anthony Van Dyck and Rembrandt Hals mensz van Rijn.

"But what makes Hagemann special is the way my father started his collection," Jan said.

His father, Hans, was an avid hunter who kept taxidermied trophies on the walls of the family living room. However, his mother was none too pleased with the creatures and convinced Hans to go to the art gallery and pick out something more tasteful.

At the local gallery, Hans immedi-



Jan Hagemann (right) at Hans Hagemann China Gallery in Beijing.

Photo provided by Jan Hagemann

ately fell in love with "Still Life of Fruits and Flowers" by 18th century Dutch painter Jan van Os. Deer heads and other specimens were soon replaced by classical paintings.

"I opened the Hagemann Gallery in Beijing to bring big-name works collected by the family to China to expose them to a broader audience," Jan said. "It was a

challenge to bring our first famous work by Camille Corot here. [But] the appreciation was overwhelming."

Jan is also interested in exchanging oil paintings. He has fallen in love with the Chinese arts, and is currently completing renovations of an ancient castle near Cologne, Germany, that will become a center for Chinese art.

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# China Open 2010

2010.9.25 - 10.10

This autumn, China Open will be held at National Tennis Center again. Not only is this a great opportunity for spectators to enjoy the top level tennis match, but also a carnival for young people who have passion for fashion, for tennis and for life. For only ¥ 30, you will watch tennis super stars' performance with no-distance, and at the same time enjoy various activities, such as "Looking for Tennis Icon", "Super Model's Show", "Tennis Clothes Show", and the final of "China Open's Angle". Hurry up, join us!

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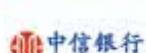
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# Summer to prepare for the future

## US high school students learn Chinese and think about careers

By Liang Meilan

The summer school holiday, to some students, means learning in a different classroom. This summer, 38 US high school students from Atlanta, Boston, Denver, Houston, New York City, Rochester and Washington DC came to China for five weeks of language studies, cultural exposure and international career development training. They headed home August 5.

"They're bringing back home not only experience with China's scenic spots and city life, but also higher Chinese language competence, deeper cultural understanding, rich community service experience and, what's most important, a clearer orientation of their future careers," said Ted Dean, chairman of the American Promoting Study Abroad (APSA), a local co-organizer of the program.



Teaching and playing with migrant students is part of the immersion program.

Photos by Carole Fenn

### Speak better Chinese

APSA is partially funded by the US State Department's National Security Language Initiative for Youth Program, which gives American high school students the opportunity to learn "less commonly taught languages" in their native land.

Participants are selected based on academic merit, and those bound for China are required to have completed at least a year of Chinese. "They are mostly kids with plans of entering a career connected with the Chinese language," Dean said.

The China program includes three and a half hours of intensive language training per day. "They are also expected to study outside of class and practice with locals," Dean said.

Peter Wambwe, 19, a resident of Washington DC, joined APSA's China summer program in 2008. Because of his intensive Chinese lessons, he is already taking a junior-level Chinese course although still a freshman at Pennsylvania State University.

"Understanding a language is a vital window to understanding a culture," Wambwe said. "Committing to learn a language opens opportunities to a lifetime of intercultural friendships, learning and fun. APSA was my first opportunity and I embraced it."

Cultural immersion activities are also important components of the program. "We have calligraphy, kung fu and painting classes," Dean said. "The afternoons are filled with either culture classes,

small team excursions in the city or visits to companies and organizations in the area."

A major change in this year's program was the emphasis on using public transportation as much as possible. Dean said this was due to "environmental reasons, to instill a sense of ownership in the experience and to teach important travel skills that will help them feel more competent in unfamiliar cities."

### Career connections

Students especially enjoyed the Career Connections component, which exposed students to career opportunities for Americans who can speak Chinese. "We were granted a rare chance to visit the US Embassy in Beijing, where we received briefings from various State Department staff about security, safety and the environment, and learned about the important services the embassy provides its citizens," said Nathan Korkman, a partic-

ipant in this summer's program from Washington DC.

"We also had the opportunity to hear from Lieutenant Colonel Dave Menser – assistant army attache – who spoke about opportunities in the military for individuals with broad backgrounds, and how he gained his language skills that played a role in his current assignment," Korkman said.

Every Tuesday evening during those five weeks, the students met with a group of 20 adults from Beijing's foreign community to learn why they chose a job in China. The speakers included clothing designers, TV producers, writers, event organizers, film distributors, dance company directors and NGO representatives.

"The sessions were filled with energy, the dialogue flowed easily and the students felt comfortable talking to people so young yet so accomplished," Carole Fenn, executive director of APSA, said.

"It provided the students with different perspectives on working and living in China. The broad and varied career paths showed students the range of job options available to individuals willing to think outside the box," Fenn said.

### Community service

The participants spent a weekend with the children at two migrant schools – Dandelion School and Bainian Vocational School – which many considered the most rewarding part of the program.

"Community service has always been an integral part of the APSA program," Dean said. "By teaching and playing with kids from underprivileged families, students from big cities in the US glimpse a totally different life and they are motivated to think how they can help and empower these people."

The experience led Daniel Hagan, another 2008 APSA China alumni, through a door he never expected to take. He deferred college for a year to return to China and do community service. He is now in Guilin, Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region teaching Chinese.

This summer's 38 participants are now engaged in the last part of the program back in the US. "They are writing papers and will present them to school superintendents and discuss with the school board the program results. They will also talk to their community about what the program has taught them and how it can contribute to improving the world," Dean said.

### Event

#### Peking Opera workshop

Understand the history and uniqueness of Peking Opera to enrich your viewing experience. China Culture Center has invited professional actors to discuss the art form's background, complexities and subtleties. They will also demonstrate the preparations involved in a performance, particularly the meticulous process of applying makeup.

Where: China Culture Center, Room 101, Kent Center, 29 Anjialou, Liangmaqiao Lu, Chaoyang District

When: August 21, 7:30-9:30 pm  
Tel: 6432 9341  
Cost: 150 yuan, 120 yuan for children under 12

#### Hike Intelligence Valley

There is a saying that people who hike Intelligence Valley become more intelligent. Join the members of Beijing Hikers as they navigate Intelligence Valley at Shentangyu Natural Scenic Area in Huairou District. There is a clear stream that runs through the valley, and the surrounding mountains make this a cool, refreshing walk. At this time of year you can spot plenty of small animals, which will excite children who come along.

Where: Shentangyu Natural Scenic Area, Huairou County  
When: August 22, 8 am  
Tel: 6432 2786  
Cost: 320 yuan

#### Discovering the Lake of Ten Temples

Houhai, a major nightlife spot in Beijing, is also called Shichahai, or "lake of ten temples." But where are the temples? With the capital's rapid pace of modernization, more and more historical relics are being demolished; some that are right in front of us get overlooked. 90 Percent Travel offers a free trip to discover the 10 temples and their stories. An English-speaking guide and traditional Beijing snacks will be provided.

Where: Houhai, 50 Houhai Beiyuan, Xicheng District  
When: August 22, 1:30-4 pm  
Tel: 1511916648  
Cost: Free

#### Children's dance workshop

Ullens Center for Contemporary Art (UCCA) and the National Ballet of China are sponsoring a series of children's dance workshops this month. The workshops are designed to teach children about ballet, the joy of movement, the skill of teamwork and what it's like to be a member of a dance troupe. Children will also have the opportunity to watch classes, rehearsals and public performances by the National Ballet of China.

Where: UCCA, 4 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District  
When: August 22 and 29, 10-11:30 am  
Tel: 8459 9269  
Cost: 80 yuan  
*(By Liang Meilan)*



High school students and teachers from the 2010 summer program

# Beijing census gets under way

By Han Manman

The month-long city population census ahead of the sixth national census began last Sunday, and Beijing police are warning people to be careful of fake enumerators.

As many as 100,000 enumerators will enter Beijing homes to register residents through September 15. The national census, held every 10 years, begins November 1.

The enumerators are largely

from local communities and the Beijing census will be conducted mainly on weekends or when people are off work, from 6 to 8 pm, said Su Hui, deputy director of the Beijing Bureau of Statistics and director of the Beijing Sixth Population Census unit.

"Unlike population censuses, this year we will register people according to their current residences rather than their registered residences," he said.

Meanwhile, Su said the

bureau has already received reports of fraudulent enumerators. He said the photos, names and ID numbers of official census takers will be posted in every residential community, but that household members should carefully check the enumerators' uniforms and badges when they show up.

Beijing's population numbered 20 million at the end of 2009, among whom 7 million were migrant workers. But studies have shown that official statistics have long overlooked the capital's huge number of short-term residents.

Foreigners and residents of Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan living on the mainland will also be counted for the first time.

Enumerators will try to weed out false family information. Su said many households do not report the death of family members so they can continue collecting social insurance from the government. Some children born in violation of the country's family-planning policy are also not registered, Su added.

All information collected in the census will be kept confidential and will not be used to prosecute violators, he said.

China's last census, which took place in November 2000, recorded a population of 1.29 billion. The first census, in 1963, recorded a population of just over 600 million.

## Panda breeding center in Chengdu recruiting special volunteers

By Liang Meilan

The Chengdu Research Base for Giant Panda Breeding is recruiting six volunteers to join the center for two months. Chinese and foreign nationals between the ages of 12 and 60 are eligible to apply.

Zhang Zhihe, director of the research base, announced the project at the Shanghai Expo Chengdu Pavilion on Monday. "The six volunteers to be chosen from the world's six billion people will experience one month of close panda observation and breeding... The base's research laboratories are also going to be open to them, where they can observe the process of artificial insemination," Zhang said, adding that they will also have the opportunity to see a panda give birth.

"The project aims to promote wildlife and environmental conservation worldwide," he said.

Sixty candidates will be picked at the end of the first round of selections in mid-September. Online voting will determine the top 12, who will undergo training at the Chengdu base. At the end of September, the six chosen volunteers will be announced and

they will begin work in October.

In its recruitment notice, the Chengdu base said it is not necessary for candidates to be experts in animal breeding, but related experience is welcome. "All they need to have is a love for animals, an awareness of environmental protection and a sense of social responsibility," Zhang said.

The most important requirement is physical fitness and a clean bill of health. "Breeding work involves much physical exertion, and pandas are susceptible to human cold viruses," Zhang said. "Besides, the one-month experience includes tracking wild pandas in the forest, so candidates have to be able to withstand a harsh environment."

Established in 1987 with six pandas rescued from the wild, the 106-hectare Chengdu Research Base now houses 83 pandas. Besides breeding pandas in captivity, the center is also involved in wildlife research, conservation education and educational tourism.

For more information about the volunteer recruitment, call 028-8351 0033.



Baby pandas in Ya'an, Sichuan

CFP Photo

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Ha Hui's art combines poetry, etiquette and court music.

By Han Manman

Traditional culture is undergoing a resurgence across the mainland, and at the vanguard is Ha Hui, a singer whose music has been called "ceremonial music of the 21st Century" and been characterized by Grammy Awards judges as uniquely Chinese.

By combining classical poetry and Confucian aesthetics, Ha's new ceremonial music preserves historic rites and traditional etiquette that have almost disappeared.

Now preparing for her world tour, Ha hopes to spread traditional Chinese philosophy to the world and spur overseas interests in its related culture.

### Concert of tradition

Her voice is mellow, sophisticated and polished.

As part of her ancient image, the lanky singer Ha Hui wears a loose-sleeved Han costume and a hairstyle straight out of ancient China as she sings at Guozijian, the highest institute of Confucian learning in ancient times.

The 32-year-old is the creator of new courtly music, a genre which combines classical melodies, ancient poetry and rites with modern instruments.

For this concert, she performs seven songs that use excerpts from China's classic poems and literary works. Her music and appearance distills thousands of years of etiquette, ceremony and dance into one modern performances.

"Tea Scent," a Tang Dynasty poem, is one of Ha's inspirations. While singing the poem, she performs a classical tea ceremony which calls to mind the fragrance of tea and the ceremony's core values of honesty, beauty, harmony and respect.

"The term 'new courtly music' is a rough approximation of my art, which combines poetry, etiquette and court music. I'm still in the early stages of exploring this new form," Ha says.

But her new art has greater ambitions than form alone.

### Spreading culture

As the image ambassador of *guoxue* – a field of study dedicated to traditional Chinese philosophy, literature and history – Ha has a mission to revive China's ancient culture and introduce it to the world. "Her performances help viewers understand how important it is to carry on our traditions," says Jiang Xiaoyu, vice chairman of Beijing Olympics City Development Association.

"In today's world, where diverse cultural forms intermingle, it is becoming increasingly difficult to protect and exhibit Chinese culture and to practice its tenets," Jiang says.

The Guozijian concert kicks off Ha's New Elegant Music World Tour, which will continue next month to Beit She'an, Israel, and then to Britain and Japan.

Ha says her upcoming concert will be the first by a Chinese artist in Beit She'an. She visited Israel three months ago and met with Israeli President Shimon Peres, who said he was interested in her music and promised to write lyrics for her on the theme of peace.

"The president loves Confucian philosophy and said my music is very meaningful," Ha says.



Ha Hui is a professional singer who promotes traditional Chinese culture through music. Her music has been called "ceremonial music of the 21st century." Photos provided by Tai Bo'er

# New vessel for philosophy

The artist has devoted herself to becoming the avatar of Chinese culture. At international appearances, she presents the restrained and graceful image of a traditional woman – one that draws much attention in a “liberated” world.

“China is a country with a rich portfolio of fine cultural traditions. As a singer, I’m doing what I can to promote our cultural legacy to people worldwide through art,” she says.

Her efforts have already been noticed by some in the government. Her album of new ceremonial music is a popular gift given by the Chinese Foreign Ministry to foreign guests.

## Pioneer of new music

Prior to her current project, Ha already had a promising career as a conservatory-trained folk singer.

But an encounter with the West transformed her – and she says that helped her find her true voice.

“After studying the classics, I realized the long and rich culture of China is a great spiritual treasure for us to absorb. That was when I finally realized what I wanted to sing about,” she says.

“There are so many things worth passing on that are boxed

up or forgotten by modern society,” Ha says. Her performances attempt to revive China’s old spirit for future generations.

But many have a hard time accepting her new music.

“Many years from now, when everyone has forgotten who I am, I hope they will still remember what I have created. I think what I can do is to work to pass on traditional poetry, culture and ceremonial music,” she says.

“I want a fragrant of this memory to survive in future generations.”

In her spare time, Ha plays *guqin*, an ancient stringed instrument, practices calligraphy and reads the classics. That constant involvement in traditional Chinese philosophy has led friends to describe her as a quiet person outside the pressures of fame and competition.

And that comes from having a simple heart.

“Maybe you have a noble face, maybe you were born in a normal family or maybe you dress nice. None of it matters, because that is your appearance and not your nature,” she says.

“When facing the world, what really matter is what you give up, what you keep, what you insist on and what you choose,” Ha says.



*Calligraphy plays an important role in traditional culture and in Ha Hui’s performance.*



*Ha loves ancient instruments.*



*Ha performs a tea ceremony in her piece ‘Tea Scent’.*

## About Ha Hui

Ha Hui is a professional singer who promotes Chinese classical music. She graduated from the College of Art at the Chinese People’s Liberation Army in July 2000, and has been awarded a master’s degree by the China College of Music.

Ha is currently an associate professor at Minzu University of China. She also serves as the ambassador of the China Ancient Culture Promotion and a member of the China Youth Federation and Chinese Musicians Association.

Her composition, “Courtesy,” was used as the theme song of the 2008 Beijing Olympic games. She sang “Full Moon Tonight” at the closing ceremony of the 2008 Olympics and was invited to sing the theme at the Shanghai Expo opening this May.

Editor: He Jianwei Designer: Yang Gen



# Forever a dissident

## Chomsky's first visit to the mainland

By He Jianwei

**L**inguist, philosopher and political activist Noam Chomsky is one of the most influential intellectuals of the last half-century.

Last Friday, Chomsky spoke about world order at Peking University on his first visit to the mainland. Many Chinese intellectuals believe the lasting influence of his visit will be comparable to the legacy of Bertrand Russell and John Dewey early last century.

Clad in a blue shirt and silver tie, the gray-haired 82-year-old professor spoke in his characteristic slow, low voice as he delivered his lecture "Contours of the World: Continuities and Changes."

The lecture, somewhat a stern warning, identified environmental catastrophe and nuclear power as the two greatest threats to humankind.

Chomsky blamed the consumer economy and businesses' unyielding push for short-term profits and high Gross Domestic Product (GDP) at any cost for the most rapid destruction of environments around the world.

Even before the Copenhagen Climate Conference last year that was intended to address environmental disaster, Chomsky knew it would be a failure and that none of its decisions would be in line with the severity of the crisis.

"Rich countries (are unwilling) to provide adequate assistance to the developing world and to control their own destructive reliance on fossil

Chomsky is regarded as the father of modern linguistics for his theory of transformational grammar released in the 1950s. However, since the Vietnam War in the 1960s, Chomsky's image has become that of a political dissident.



Noam Chomsky speaks at Peking University about the future and world order. CFP Photo

fuels – in part the result of huge state-corporate social engineering programs designed over many years to magnify that reliance, and with it the profits of the energy and manufacturing industries," he said.

While Chomsky lauded China for its spectacular development following national reform and opening in 1978, he said the government must not neglect the resulting pollution and social inequalities.

To combat the second nuclear danger, Chomsky said immediate action was required to reduce the number of and proliferation of weapons. One of the most important steps is the establishment of nuclear weapons free zones (NWFZ), he said.

He said a new Middle East NWFZ should be set up to include Israel, Iran and all US forces operating in the region. "The year 2010 seems to

be the year for Iran, because the Western media announced that Iran would be the greatest danger," he said. "In the West, Israel's nuclear weapons are not considered a threat, just as our own are not."

Since the George W. Bush administration, the US has grown to become the world's largest supplier of dangerous arms and military training, Chomsky said. The country was active in 20 of the world's 27

major wars as of 2007.

When asked what his future plans are, Chomsky said: "Trying to do something about the suffering and desperate fate of a huge number of people and, by now, the entire species."

While he will continue his research in linguistics, philosophy and cognitive science, he said his greater "commitments remain."

Chomsky is regarded as the father of modern linguistics for his theory of transformational grammar released in the 1950s. However, since the Vietnam War in the 1960s, Chomsky's image has become that of a political dissident.

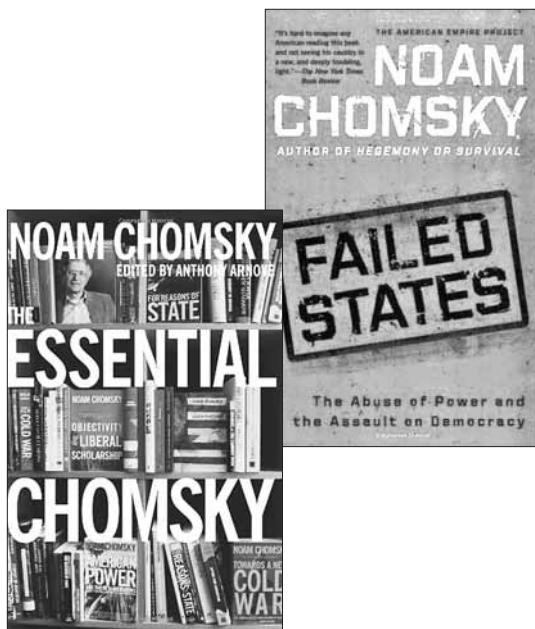
Born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania to scholarly parents, Chomsky describes his childhood neighborhood as a Jewish ghetto where he got an early taste of anti-Semitism.

He developed a considerable awareness of international politics, and by his early teens that awareness led Chomsky to identify with anarchist philosophy and politics.

According to the Arts and Humanities Citation Index, an index of 1,100 of the world's leading arts and humanities journals, Chomsky was cited as a source more often than any other living scholar between the years 1980 and 1992. He was the eighth most-cited source.

In 2005, he was voted as the top intellectual by *Prospect* magazine, followed by Italian writer and academic Umberto Eco, British professor Richard Dawkins and Czech playwright Vaclav Havel.

## Chomsky's recent books



### Hopes and Prospects

Published June 2010, 336pp, Haymarket Book, \$16

This book is essential reading for all concerned about the challenges still facing the human race. Chomsky surveys the dangers and prospects of the early 21st century. By exploring the growing gap between North and South, American exceptionalism, the fiascos of Iraq and Afghanistan, the US-Israeli assault on Gaza and the recent financial bailouts, he sees hope for the future in a democratic wave in Latin America and in global solidarity movements that suggest "real progress toward freedom and justice."

### The Essential Chomsky

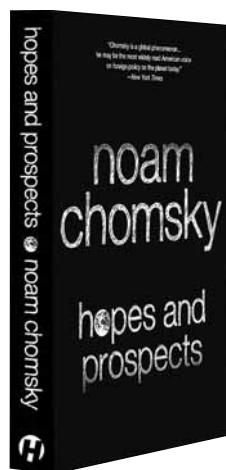
Published February 2008, 496pp, New Press, \$19.95

This book assembles Chomsky's most important writings, including excerpts from his influential texts written during the last 40 years. The publication coincided with the author's 80th birthday.

### Failed States: The Abuse of Power and the Assault on Democracy

Published April 2007, 320pp, Holt Paperbacks, \$16

This text explores the latest developments in US foreign and domestic policy. Chomsky reveals Washington's plans to further militarize the planet, greatly increasing the risks of nuclear war. He also assesses the dangerous consequences of the occupation of Iraq; documents Washington's self-exemption from international norms, including the Geneva conventions and the Kyoto Protocol; and examines how the US electoral system is designed to lock out meaningful democracy.



# Small diversions for desktop gaming



## Plants vs. Zombies

Plants vs. Zombies is one of the biggest Internet phenomenon to spill into the real world, with fans acting out the war between plants and zombies in public spaces and selling memorabilia on Taobao.

The game, released last May, is a tower defense video game developed and published by PopCap Games for PC and Mac. The first edition is 30 megabytes and runs on average computers. It has been the most popular game in China since its release.

The player controls a homeowner who uses a variety of plants to repel an advancing army of zombies. The player must defend his own home, along with the home of a neighbor called Crazy Dave. Missions take place by both day and night, and in the front yard, backyard and on the roof.

The characters feature cute designs, especially the zombies, which have different uniforms and skills. Each plant has a unique function, and success depends on the player's ability to arrange the plants to make the best use of his Sun Points. They money the player earns by killing zombies can be spent at Crazy Dave's shop on new types of plants.

Warcraft III Tower Defense, Insaniquarium and Tapper were the three biggest influences on Plants vs. Zombie, designer George Fan said. The game is also available on iPhone and iPad.

However, its popularity and accessibility brought the game under legal scrutiny when one dancing zombie was found to bear a striking resemblance to Michael Jackson in his Thriller days. The character has since been replaced by a more generic disco zombie after a stern warning from Jackson's lawyers.

## Players' comments

*"Plants vs. Zombies is the best game I've played in two years. At first glance I thought it was nothing but a simple diversion made for kids or girls. The game turned out to be impossible to put down once you get into it. There's no fancy CG or compatibility problems: this game gets straight to the point of gaming by being interesting and challenging. The iPad edition is even better since it makes use of the touch-sensitive screen."*

*But there is bad news for Chinese gamers. Some unscrupulous native pirates hacked in spyware and advertisements to make money off the game. Beware if you are hoping to download the PC edition."*

— Aaron Liu, programmer



## Privates

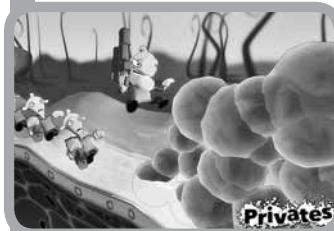
The premise for this game is as weird as its name suggests: the player controls an army of condom-hatted marines on a mission to battle monsters in women's vaginas.

Produced by the UK-based studio Zombie Cow, the game was made to assist in educating British teens about the risks of sexual transmitted disease (STD), which are transmitted through unprotected sexual activities. The studio secured funding from the UK production house Channel 4.

Players lead their Privates teams into a woman's vagina, and along the way they learn what the various STDs are, how they are transmitted, their symptoms and their treatments or cures.

These condom hats protect the marines and are worth bonus points if the player's team survives the level with their armor intact.

Each of the game's four weapons has a special STD-fighting purpose. Players must rapidly switch between their Anti-Bacterial, Anti-Fungal, Anti-Viral and Spermicidal weapons to beat the wayward diseases. The game is presented in a "2.5D" style. The resolution can be adjusted to fit a 23-inch widescreen television or monitor.



## Player's comments

*"Once again, we see that a creative idea is essential to creating a successful game. Privates' characters are cute and the visual effects are nice, especially the lighting effects when you fire your gun. I don't know whether kids in the UK will learn anything from this game, but at least it makes sense."*

*But this game really runs better on a high-end PC with a professional video card. Most normal computers can only run it at a very low resolution.*

*Privates is amusing and fun to play, but it is hardly that amazing, and without any additional missions or prizes to unlock, I doubt most games will play through it more than once."*

— Alex Li, tech writer



## By Wang Yu

One of the toughest questions for a gamer is whether to upgrade his PC or buy the latest Xbox 360.

Chipmakers and game developers have long conspired to lift more money from fans' wallets. Every new visual masterpiece to hit store shelves always requires a new upgrade to the latest and greatest video card – usually released in tandem.

But some designers have finally heard the pleas of their money-strapped fans.

As the average PC game balloons beyond 4 gigabytes, their 100-megabyte games require less hardware and disk space to provide hours of entertainment.

This week, *Beijing Today* meets up with local gamers to test small ways to kill time.



## Burn Zombie Burn

Zombies should get an award for their dedicated service to the video game industry. They are the go-to "species" whenever developers need something for their humans to murder.

This former PlayStation 3 game was released last week on PC. In *Burn Zombie Burn*, players control a character called Bruce and fight a never-ending horde of zombies. The objective of the game is to kill as many zombies as possible before Bruce dies. Players have to earn certain scores to unlock more of the game.

As described in the game's title, *Burn Zombie Burn* is all about setting zombies on fire.

There are four game modes: Freeplay, Defense, Timed and

Challenge. The game has six unique levels, each with an event triggered by a big red button that can be switched on by hitting it with three weapon combos. Usually the buttons trigger something helpful, but in the later stage of the game they may harm players.

In order to score high, players must set many zombies on fire at the same time. Each flaming corpse acts as a score multiplier. Videos of burning zombies can be recorded and uploaded to YouTube.

GameSpot gave the game a 7/10, saying "It's short on variety, but an innovative risk-vs-reward scoring system makes *Burn Zombie Burn* an intriguing entry in the top-down shooter genre."

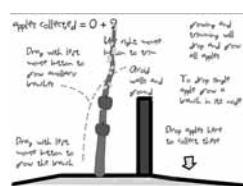
## Player's comments

*"If the bloody scenes in zombie movies aren't enough to satisfy your desire to off the undead, try this game. It's fun to win awards and new weapons that can improve your massacre. Never bypass the training sections because they help you get familiar with the system."*

*At first you may think killing zombies is easy and boring, but this game delivers in that you can always find something new on each run of the game. Bigger productions like Prince of Persia and Battlefield can seem more like watching a Hollywood movie, but these popular smaller games are like Guy Ritchie's Snatch: funny, smart and full of humor."*

— Zhang Yi, gamer

## No killing, all physics



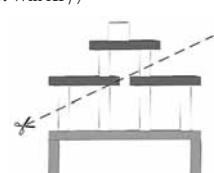
### Apple e Apple

The goal of the game is to grow as many apples as possible before collecting your arrows. It requires basic physics knowledge to clear each mission, which can be a headache for gamers more accustomed to shooting everything.

**Size:** 5 MB  
**OS:** Win XP/7

### Cut it

Colored blocks are assembled and hidden under a white box. Players must then use their memory and mouse to cut open the box, allowing only the green bricks to fall to the bottom. On more challenging levels, there may be only one small green brick that will be very difficult to remove.



**Size:** 7 MB  
**OS:** Win XP/7



*Shea butter-enriched soap, 118 yuan for 150 grams*



*Pre de Provence has full skin care products.*

## Artisan soap from Provence

France has a long history making quality natural soap. One of its famous brands, Pre de Provence, just entered China with the opening of a flagship store near The Place.

Pre de Provence is spacious and has many skin care, hygiene and beautifying products for every girl. Everything in the store is 100 percent natural and contains pure essential oil. No products contain parabens, ethyl alcohol or phenoxyethanol.

The famous soap is made using traditional French methods and traditional ingre-

dients: triple-milled sapindus seeds with shea butter, lavender, rose and mint.

There are 18 kinds of shea butter-enriched soap, and among them are some very unique fragrances, like vanilla bean (118 yuan for 150 grams), suitable for any skin type, and peony (118 yuan for 150 grams) for dry skin. The peony soap claims to have rich vitamins that can prevent freckles.

*Beijing Today* recommends the Marseille soap (268 yuan for 600 grams), which comes with 72 percent olive oil and a bio-

degradable package. Marseille soap is a 600-year-old soap made from vegetable oils, first regulated by King Louis XIV in 1688, suitable for any skin type and even newborn babies. It takes four weeks to make a proper Marseille soap.

### Pre de Provence

Where: Near The Place, 1F, Shijiecheng, 10 Jinhui Lu, Chaoyang District

Open: 10 am - 9 pm

Tel: 8590 7949/7885



*Show gel, 186 yuan for 150 ml*

*Photos provided by Pre de Provence*

## Toy houses

The toy house at Gulou Dong Dajie is a popular hangout for teenagers and adults. Apart from automobile and plane models, it also has many timeless action figures, like Transformers, Barbie dolls, Spider-Man and Iron Man.

New arrivals include doll-house furniture and utilities, Barbie outfits, afternoon tea sets and international gourmet series like pizza, sushi, noodles and steak. Each comes in a package of nine to 12 choices (starting from 380 yuan per box).

### Toys Golden Age

Where: 39 Gulou Dong Dajie, Dongcheng District  
Open: 10 am - 8 pm  
Tel: 6403 3382  
Website: jnhtoys.com



*Doll house bathroom miniatures, price unknown*

*Photo by Ding Chunhan*

## Functional kitchenware from Taobao

In recent years, more and more unique kitchenware brands have entered the local market. Most of them are available at high-end department stores and cost a fortune.

To buy smart, *Beijing Today* suggests a few online stores that sell interesting products at cheaper prices.

Shop62286199.taobao.com only sells Lekue, a Spanish brand that emphasizes functionality, quality, innovation and avant-

garde design. Its products are made of 100 percent platinum silicone, which can function at temperatures between -51 to 127 C.

We highly recommend its lemon press (128 yuan for one, 198 yuan for two). To use it, just put half a lemon into the press and then squeeze. Unlike traditional lemon juicers, the Lekue lemon press can keep the juice from spattering everywhere.

We also like the cooking mesh (268 yuan), which lets you cook separate ingredients at the same time.

To teach buyers how to use different products, the online store has many instructional videos.

For cheaper silicone ice cube trays and baking sheets, *Beijing Today* suggests xiaoxiaofood.taobao.com. The online store is owned by a local food blogger.

### Lekue

Web site: Shop62286199.taobao.com



*Lekue lemon press, 128 yuan*

*Photos by Ding Chunhan*



*"I-love-you" kitchen cutout, 12 yuan from xiaoxiaofood.taobao.com*



*Ice cube box, 20 yuan (left) and instant dessert package (10 yuan), both from xiaoxiaofood.taobao.com*

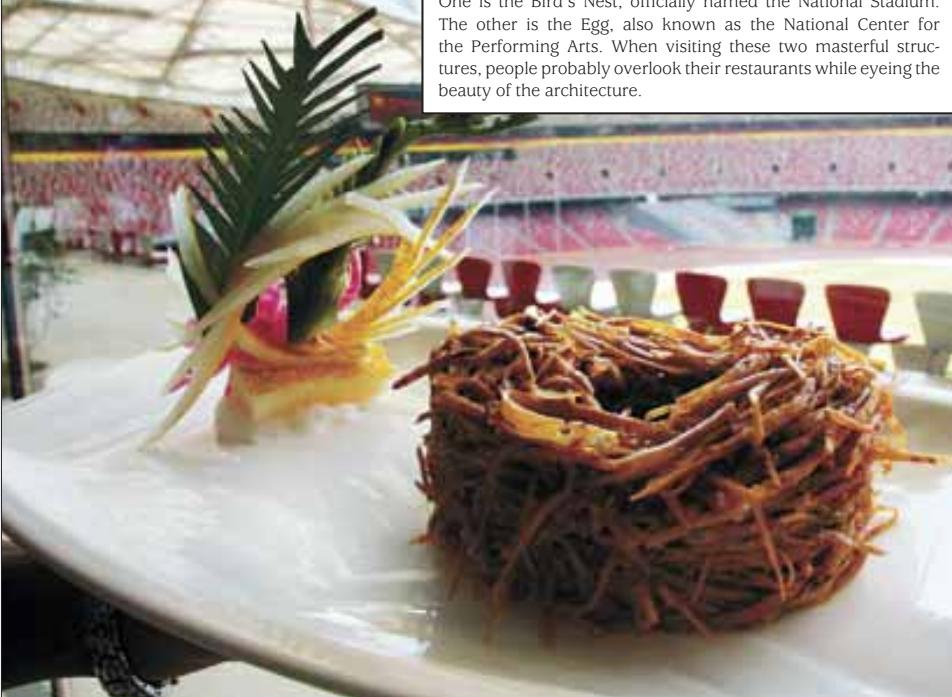


*Pizza shovel, 10 yuan from xiaoxiaofood.taobao.com*

# Big appetites, bigger views

By Chu Meng

Two buildings in the city rightfully deserve the title grand. One is the Bird's Nest, officially named the National Stadium. The other is the Egg, also known as the National Center for the Performing Arts. When visiting these two masterful structures, people probably overlook their restaurants while eyeing the beauty of the architecture.



## The taste of Olympics

On the eastern part of the Bird's Nest's third floor are the VIP grandstands, which were used for world leaders during the Olympics. Since last weekend, the 4,000-square-meter area, which has the best view of the stadium, has served as an Olympic-themed organic food restaurant.

Standing in front of the 700-meter long, 3-meter high French window wall, which divides the grandstands from the dining area, diners are treated to the sight of the fantastic bow-shaped interior of the National Stadium. Looking above at the rim of the bow, one can't help but think back to August 8, 2008, when Li Ning ran along the top and lit the torch.

Beijing Yuandingyuan organic farm, built three years ago and located 90 minutes away by car in Changping District, is the restaurant's vegetable and meat supplier.

"In order to build an authentic organic farm, three years of organic planting is essential for land conservation. Organic food will only grow on organic land. The distance from urban pollution is also key," said Sun Yuping, deputy head of the restaurant and former chief chef in Beijing's first three-star hotel in 1990.

The farm makes its own organic soybean sauce, vinegar, pepper sauce and saucing wines. No food additives can be found in the kitchen. Even the dishware is carefully chosen. "We control glaze colors on the plates," Sun said.

The farm was previously responsible for supplying food for many of China's Olympic athletes,

including gold-medal diver Guo Jingjing and badminton champion Lin Dan.

"Now people from home and abroad can eat what Olympic gold medalists ate," Sun said.

The Bird's Nest Restaurant's devotion to organic foods may actually hamper some of their dishes as far as taste and variety. The nutritional value of the food, however, is undeniable. The restaurant mainly serves Chinese dishes, more or less adjusted according to international tastes.

Olympic-themed dishes are must-orders. An appetizer called Bird's Nest (78 yuan) consists of shredded meat from sauced duck wings; the "Water Cube" (138 yuan) is sea urchin and chicken stock jelly; the "Olympic Torch" (88 yuan) is marinated ostrich's gizzard; and the "Ethnic Pillars" (45 yuan) is yam with blueberry sauce.

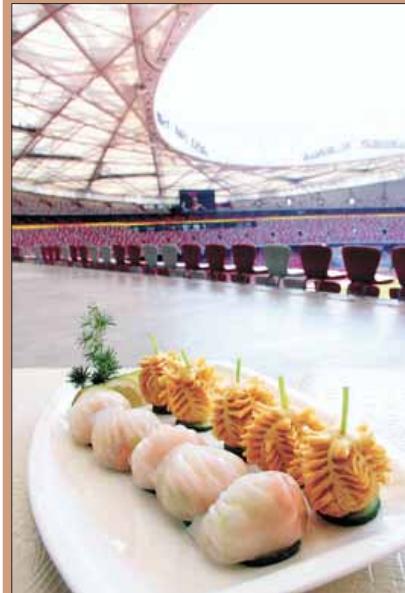
Jason Yuan, 40, the chief chef from Hong Kong, compares what he does to what fashion designers do. "A successful chef is one who can keep up with the latest fashion or stay one step ahead. That is to say, he has to explore new ingredients, create new tastes based upon creative combinations of traditional materials, study fashionable trend of dining habits and deliver something healthy," he said while sipping a mushroom soup he just created.

### Bird's Nest Restaurant

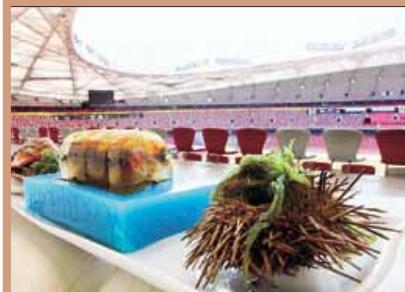
Where: 3rd floor of the Bird's Nest in Olympic Green, Chaoyang District

Open: 11 am - 2 pm; 5-9 pm  
Tel: 8437 0238

*The Bird's Nest duck meat, 78 yuan*



*The shrimp dumpling and durian cakes, 45 yuan*



*Water Cube of sea urchin and chicken stock jelly, 138 yuan*



*Inside Grand Egg Western Restaurant*  
Photos provided by Wei Ping

## The taste of melodies at Grand Egg

Chief chef Peter Wei of the Grand Egg Western Restaurant, on the top floor of the National Center for the Performing Arts (NCPA), is also a musician. As such, he reinterprets melodies as food.

The prelude salad (98 yuan), made of Parma ham, mozzarella cheese, cherry tomato and mixed lettuce, provides a clean taste that prepares the buds for later courses. The "chapter one main course" (230 yuan) consists of grilled lamb chops with vanilla wine. Three purple fired onion rings decorate the plate with chocolate color home-brewed vanilla wine.

Then comes the "cadence course" (180 yuan), a beautiful rose-shaped smoked salmon sauced with black fish roe. The romantic "ending course" (88 yuan) is a dessert of lovely British raspberry cheesecake accompanied with pink Chinese peach flowers. The chief chef said such artistic plate settings were inspired by the upsurges of music that fly up from the theaters below his kitchen every day.

"I want our eaters to have the sensual pleasure of the art of music, not only from the ears, but also from the taste buds," Wei said. "If we can call cuisine a kind of art, then I believe my mission is to bring together the commonalities of two different kinds of art."

Wei, former chief chef at Regent Hotel of Beijing, is good at creating special menus according to the theater's current performances. The Red Cliff menu consists of southeastern China cuisine, namely spicy food. The Jane Eyre menu introduces British royal cuisine from the 19th century. He is currently working on a new menu for the ballet Sleeping Beauty, which comes to NCPA in September.

### Grand Egg Western Restaurant

Where: 5th floor of the National Center for the Performing Arts, No. 2 Chang'an Avenue, Xicheng District

Open: 10 am - 10 pm  
Tel: 6655 0111



*Grilled lamb chops with vanilla wine, 230 yuan*



*British raspberry cheesecake, 88 yuan*



## Making music beside the Great Wall

By Wang Yu

After the second InMusic festival, held early this month in neighboring Hebei Province, ended in controversy, Beijing concert lovers are now preparing for the next big event: the Great Wall TangleWood Forest Music Festival in Yanqing District from August 27 to 29.

Three stages will be built for the 72 Chinese and foreign acts slated to perform, including big names such as Xie Tianxiao, Hedgehog, Bigger Bang, Pet Conspiracy and Re-Tros.

Luo Dayou, a singer and song writer from Taiwan, will play the finale on the first day. This will be Luo's first music festival, but the 57-year-old is no stranger to live performances. He was one of the first Taiwanese musicians to be introduced to mainland audiences in the early '80s and he has fans even among the present generation. Luo says his festival set will consist of both classic and new tracks.

The event's four foreign names – Arms and Legs (US), Grass Widow (US), The London Souls (UK) and Maximilian Hecker (Germany) – will perform blues, funk and indie rock.

The rest of the lineup consists of indie artists, which reflects the niche of the festival organizer, Modern Sky Records. Joanna Wang, a singer and song writer who took China by storm with her debut record *Start from Here* in 2008, will perform on the last day. Wang has recently shifted from jazz to rock with her new band Tokyo Terror, formed in honor of her favorite Japanese musician Shinya Ringo of Tokyo Incidents.

Zhang Xuan and Cao Fang, two indie vocalists who have been off the festival circuit for a long time, will also take the stage.

On the second and last day, the main stage will be transformed into an electronic music stage for Acupuncture Records' "Electric Picnic." There, 15 DJs will play non-stop music from 11 pm to 7 am the next day. The Great Wall music festival is bound to be an exciting three nights.

### Great Wall TangleWood Forest Music Festival

Where: TangleWood, Yanqing District

Getting there: If you are driving, take Badaling Highway and exit at Shuiguan Changcheng, then follow the signs to the venue. Alternatively, you can take Bus 919 from Deshengmen station. During the festival, the last bus will leave the venue at 2 am.

Admission: 150 yuan for single-day entry, 250 yuan for three days  
Tel: 400 610 3721

## Sunday, August 22

### Movie

#### Breathless (1960)

Michel Poiccard, a sociopath and small-time thief, steals a car and impulsively kills the motorcycle policeman who pursues him. Despite being wanted by the authorities, he renews his relationship with Patricia Franchini, a hip American woman studying journalism at the Sorbonne, whom he met a few weeks earlier. Before leaving Paris, he plans to collect a debt from an underworld

acquaintance and expects her to accompany him on his getaway to Italy.

Where: Ullens Center for Contemporary Art (UCCA), 798 Art District, 4 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District  
When: 1:30 pm  
Admission: 15 yuan, 10 yuan for students  
Tel: 8459 9269

### Nightlife

#### Li Gaoyang Jazz Trio

The trio specializes in bebop, hard bop and East Coast jazz.

Where: Jianghu Bar, 7 Dongmianhua Hutong, Jiaodokou Nan Dajie, Dongcheng District  
When: 9 pm  
Admission: 30 yuan  
Tel: 6401 4611

### Exhibition

#### Relatively Related – Xiang Yang Solo Exhibition

Xiang's sculpture series examines the evolving relationship between China and the US.  
Where: SZ Art Center, 798 Art District, 4 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District

3 Wenhuiyuan Lu, Xiaoxitan, Haidian District  
When: 7 pm  
Admission: 20 yuan  
Tel: 8229 6153

### Nightlife

#### Shonen Knife China Tour

This all-female Japanese pop punk trio crafts simple yet exuberant lyrics, in both Japanese and English, set to infectious melodies.

Where: Mao Livehouse, 111 Gulou Dong Dajie, Dongcheng District  
When: 9:30 pm  
Admission: 100 yuan advance purchase, 150 yuan at the door  
Tel: 64025080

## Upcoming

### Nightlife

#### Heath Marshall

Marshall, a former Australian professional basketball player, creates raw, bluesy music on the guitar and drums.

Where: Jianghu Bar, 7 Dongmianhua Hutong, Jiaodokou Nan Dajie, Dongcheng District  
When: August 25, 9:30 pm  
Admission: Free  
Tel: 6401 4611

## Stage in September

### Concert

#### London Symphony Orchestra

Where: Poly Theater, 14 Dongzhimen Nan Dajie, Dongcheng District  
When: September 12, 7:30 pm  
Admission: 200-2,010 yuan  
Tel: 6551 8058

#### Pictures at an Exhibition – Xu Mu's Piano Recital

Where: Forbidden City Concert Hall (inside Zhongshan Park), 18 Zhaodengyu Lu, Xicheng District  
When: September 23, 7:30 pm  
Admission: 30-380 yuan  
Tel: 6417 7845

#### Stuttgart Chamber Orchestra

Where: Concert Hall of the National Center for the Performing Arts, 2 Xi Chang'an Jie, Xicheng District  
When: September 24, 7:30 pm  
Admission: 80-380 yuan  
Tel: 6655 0000

#### Joanie Madden and Cherish the Ladies

Where: Beijing Exhibition Theater, 135 Xizhimen Wai Dajie, Xicheng District  
When: September 29-30, 7:30 pm  
Admission: 180-880 yuan  
Tel: 400 610 3721

### Drama

#### Du Lala

Where: Poly Theater, 14 Dongzhimen Nan Dajie, Dongcheng District  
When: September 1-5, 7:30 pm  
Admission: 80-680 yuan  
Tel: 6551 8058

#### Romeo and Zhu Yingta

Where: Haidian Theater, 28 Zhongguancun Dajie, Haidian District  
When: September 3-4, 7:30 pm  
Admission: 180-480 yuan  
Tel: 6405 4842

#### The Poison

Where: Peking University Hall, 5 Yiheyuan Lu, Haidian District  
When: September 10-11, 7:30 pm  
Admission: 20-150 yuan  
Tel: 6275 8452

#### I Love Peach Blossom

Where: Peking University Hall, 5 Yiheyuan Lu, Haidian District  
When: September 14-15, 7:30 pm  
Admission: 20-180 yuan  
Tel: 6275 8452

#### Red Rose and White Rose

Where: Multi-Purpose Theater of the National Center for the Performing Arts, 2 Xi Chang'an Jie, Xicheng District  
When: September 14-23, 7:30 pm  
Admission: 100-480 yuan  
Tel: 6655 0000

(By He Jianwei)

# Keeping baby weight under control

By Li Zhixin

Pregnant women may be eating for two, but one new study reports that women who gain too much weight during their pregnancies may deliver early or give birth to overweight infants.

Balanced meals that provide good nutrition for two are the best way to ensure both pregnant mothers and their babies stay healthy.

## Overeaters may have obese babies

Women who gain too much weight during pregnancy put their children at risk of obesity later in life, according to an Associated Press report about US researchers who tracked women during their second pregnancies in Michigan and New Jersey from 1989 and 2003.

Among the 513,000 women and 1.1 million infants studied, scientists found that women who gained more than 24 kilograms during their pregnancy produced babies who were 150 grams heavier at birth than the infants of women who gained 10 kilograms.

The study was published online at the beginning of the month in the medical journal *Lancet*.

"Heavier babies have a significantly higher risk of staying heavy throughout their lives," said David Ludwig, one of the doctors who wrote the report. "Big babies also have higher chances of developing problems later in life including asthma, allergies and even cancer."

Ludwig, director of the Optimal Weight for Life program at Children's Hospital in Boston, and his co-author said most women put on similar weight at pregnancy, though some become heavier during subsequent births.

Previous studies found that pregnant women who gained too much weight developed diabetes and high blood pressure, but little research explored what those extra pounds meant for the babies.

Typically, large babies are more likely to become stuck in the birth canal or to require a cesarean section.

Ludwig said that when pregnant women overeat, some of those extra calories over-stimulate fetal growth.

"The fetus ends up developing in an abnormal metabolic environment where there is excess blood sugar. That could alter the development of tissues, organs and perhaps even the wiring of the brain that regulates appetite and metabolism," Ludwig said.

The doctors said that obesity prevention in the womb was not about encouraging pregnant women to trim down — women who gain too little weight are at increased risk of having a small baby or of developing diabetes, high blood pressure and varicose veins.



CFP Photo

## How much weight is right?

If your health provider recommends a specific weight to you during pregnancy, talk to him or her about your weight gain and loss goals. Below are some suggestions:

1. If you begin pregnancy at a normal weight, you should gain 10 to 12 kilograms over the nine months.
2. If you begin pregnancy underweight, you should probably gain a little more. That's because underweight women are more likely to have small babies. A 12 to 18 kilogram gain is usually recommended.
3. If you begin pregnancy overweight, you should gain only 7 kilograms over the nine months. Never try to lose weight during pregnancy because it may harm your baby.
4. If you were obese at the start of your pregnancy, you should gain only 5 kilograms over the nine months.
5. If you're expecting twins and began pregnancy at a normal weight, you should probably gain between 17 to 26 kilograms over the nine months. If you began pregnancy overweight, aim for gaining a total of 14 to 23 kilograms. If you were obese at the start of your pregnancy, you should gain between 11 and 19 kilograms.

"Don't worry if you gain less than half a kilogram in the first trimester. You can make up for it later. It is best to put on weight slowly and steadily," said Zhang Shuzhen, an obstetrician at Maternal and Child Care Service Center in Chaoyang District.

"Many women have one or two 'growth spurts' during which they gain several kilograms in a short time period and then level off. This is not worrisome unless it becomes a pattern. The important thing is to keep an eye on your overall gain."

However, it is not necessary to be obsessive about your weight during pregnancy because the information is of little use in detecting problems, she said.

## Avoiding excessive weight gain

You should not try to lose weight if you have gained a little too much during the beginning of your pregnancy. Instead, try to eat a more balanced diet with a variety of foods that will supply you and your baby with the proper nutrients.

Here are some tips to slow your weight gain:

- 1. Do not add salt to foods when cooking.** Salt causes your body to retain water.
- 2. Prepare meals using low-fat cooking methods.** Frying foods in oil or butter will increase the calories from fat in a meal. Baking, broiling, grilling or boiling are healthier, lower-fat methods of cooking. When eating out at a fast-food restaurant, choose lower-fat items and avoid fried foods such as French fries.
- 3. Limit sweets and high calorie snacks.** Cookies, candies, donuts, cakes, syrup, honey and potato chips provide many calories with little nutrition, so avoid these types of foods. Instead, try fresh fruits, low-fat yogurt and pretzels as lower-calorie snacks and dessert choices.
- 4. Limit sweet or sugary drinks.** Sweetened drinks such as soft drinks, fruit punch, fruit drinks, iced tea, lemonade or powdered drink mixes provide many calories and few nutrients. Choose water, club soda or mineral water to avoid extra calories.
- 5. Avoid whole-milk products.** You need at least four servings of milk products every day. However, using skim or 1 percent milk will greatly reduce the amount of calories and fat you eat. Also choose low-fat or fat-free cheese or yogurt.

## Tips: Foods to avoid during pregnancy

**1. Raw Meat:** Uncooked seafood and rare or undercooked beef or poultry should be avoided because of the risk of contamination with coliform bacteria, toxoplasmosis and salmonella.

**2. Smoked seafood:** Smoked seafood should be avoided because it could be contaminated with listeria, a food-borne disease that can be found in humans and animals.

**3. Fish with mercury:** Fish that contain high levels of mercury should be avoided. Mercury consumed during pregnancy has been linked to developmental delays and brain damage. Some fish which tend to be mercury-rich are shark, swordfish, king mackerel and tilefish.

**4. Alcohol:** There is no amount of alcohol known to be safe during pregnancy. Prenatal exposure to alcohol can interfere with the healthy development of a baby.

Depending on the amount, timing and pattern of use, alcohol consumption during pregnancy can lead to Fetal Alcohol Syndrome or other developmental disorders.

**5. Caffeine:** Some studies show that caffeine may be related to miscarriages. Avoid caffeine during the first trimester to reduce the likelihood of a miscarriage. Caffeine is a diuretic, which means it helps eliminate fluids from the body. This can result in water and calcium loss.

# Blossoming to the sun

## A guide to Beijing's suburban sunflower fields



Photos by Chen Changchun



By Zhang Dongya

To many, the sunflower is just a crop that produces seeds and cooking oil. But for urban dwellers, large fields of sunflowers can be an inspiring sight.

Beijing has many suburban sunflower fields, such as Qianjiadian Town of Yanqing County and Changgou in Fangshan District. *Beijing Today* spoke with local travelers about their favorite spots and got tips on how to make the most of a sunflower-viewing expedition.

### Summer beauty in Qianjiadian

Local farmers in Qianjiadian Town, Yanqing County, have planted 134 hectares of sunflowers on 10 plots. Among them, Hongshawan Village and Shaliangzi have the largest area and best view of sunflowers. One cliff in Hongshawan Village offers an elevated spot for a bird's eye view.

Along the road to Qianjiadian, trees and mountains form a splendid picture called "baili hualang" by locals, meaning "kilometers of scrolls of paintings."

Arriving at Hongshawan (red stone bay), you will see sunflowers staring back at you with their brown eyes. They sway on both sides of the road in rows as

orderly as honor guards.

"I was almost ready to keel over when I saw the sea of sunflowers. The scene that appeared before my eyes is what you'd see in postcards or van Gogh's paintings," said Chen Changchun, chief editor of likefar.com, a popular Beijing travel network.

"It rained heavily the day before, so the day we arrived there were blue skies and white clouds," Chen said. "The mountains were covered with thick trees, which made the golden sunflowers look brighter and more vivid."

The sunflower, native to Central America, came to China during the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644). Because of its relatively short presence there are no ancient poems about sunflowers. But many Chi-

nese who love sunflowers mention Dutch painter Vincent van Gogh, who painted a series of sunflowers.

The flower attracts many photography enthusiasts. We found an old man who said that while these sunflowers aren't as big as those found in the prairies, they form a striking sight when against the backdrop of the canyons and mountains.

"The local government postponed the blooming date of the flowers this year by using different species, so the flowers will last until early September," said Zhao Yajing, an employee of Beijing Agricultural Field Station.

Most of the sunflowers planted here are used to produce sunflower seeds. In countryside tourist resorts, it is very common to

see sunflowers sold as snacks.

### Surrounding countryside scenery

On the road to Qianjiadian, tall and thick trees stand sentinel, sieving slivers of sunlight.

Near Hongshawan Village is Hekou (river mouth), the site of several cottages. There is a small pool and a pavilion on a huge rock near the water. Not far from the water is a bridge, with a small field of sunflowers on one end that haven't completely blossomed.

In a little ditch nearby, several ducks swim in the water. Wild flowers such as dandelions dot the grassland.

*Continued on page 21...*



Small pool with clean water in Hongshawan Village



The sea of sunflowers attracts city dwellers and photography lovers. Wild flowers dot the grassland in countryside.





①

*... continued from page 20*

②



③



The neighboring Xiushuiwan Village is a folk village that has been redecorated to receive tourists. Located deep in the mountains, villagers here continue a simple and rustic lifestyle. With few visitors, the mountains and water here are comparatively clean. There are swings and stone benches for visitors to rest. Xiushuiwan is close to Bai River, which is an ideal place for a picnic or barbecue.

**Getting to Qianjidian Village in Yanqing:** Drive along Badaling Expressway to Yanqing County and turn on Luanchi Lu to Xiushuiwan. Or take bus No. 919 at Deshengmen to Nancaiyuan and transfer to the second branch (zhi 2) of bus No. 925 to Hongshawan.

#### Other destinations

##### Changguo Town in Fangshan District

This year, farmers in Fangshan have grown 87 hectares of sunflowers in Changguo Town. They are expected to blossom at the end of August and in early September.

Getting there: Drive along Beijing-Shijiazhuang Expressway and take Lulihe Exit. Turn west to Fanyi Lu until the Changguo toll. Or take 917zhi from the Tianqiao stop and get off at Changguo.

Tel: 6136 5564 (Fangshan Institute of Agricultural Sciences)

##### Sunflower Theme Park in Fangshan

This park, near 107 State Highway, has 1.3 hectares of sunflowers in bloom. It also features more than 20 species of flowers, including lavender and morning glory.

Getting there: Drive along Beijing-Shijiazhuang Expressway and take the Doudian Exit. Turn left and drive to Jingshen Road. The field is on the left.

Tel: 6033 4969

##### Ten Ferry in Fangshan

Shidu, or Ten Ferry, is a famous scenic area in Beijing that includes 20 hectares of sunflowers. Visitors can rent boats at Ten Ferry and view flowers from the water.

Getting there: Drive along Beijing-Shijiazhuang Express-

way and take the Yancun Exit. Turn on Jingzhou Lu and then take a left to Ten Ferry.

Tel: 6134 0812

##### Prag Farm in Tongzhou

Hectares of sunflowers that were planted for sightseeing began blooming in July. Another field of colorful sunflowers is expected to blossom in September. Here, the sunflowers come in red, purple, white and green. There are also some short plants that are suitable for growing in vases. There is also a lavender garden, which is good for camping.

Getting there: Drive along Beijing-Harbin Expressway and take the Xiji Exit. Turn right and drive another 5 kilometers.

Tel: 5713 2687

Admission: 20 yuan

##### Beiwu in Shunyi

Located on the border of Beijing and Hebei Province, the sunflowers here will blossom in September. Near the field is an experimental patch of woods used for cultivation of domestic chickens.

Getting there: Drive along Jingping Lu and take the Beiwu Exit. Turn on Linbei Road and drive 800 meters east.

##### Heizhuanghu in Chaoyang

Located in Shuangshu Village in Hezhuanghu Town, this is the closest garden to the downtown area.

Getting there: Drive from East Fifth Ring Road to Beijing-Shenyang Expressway and take the Dougezhuang exit. Go through Dongmagezhuang Village to Shuangshu Village.

##### Tips:

1. All the sunflower fields are free except Prag Farm in Tongzhou, 20 yuan.
2. People who are allergic to pollen should be cautious.
3. Use sun block and wear a wide-brimmed hat to protect against the summer sun.



⑤

①Xiushuiwan Village is a folk village that now receives tourists.

②Local villagers live simple lives.

③Swings and stone benches are available for visitors to rest

④A cup of tea with local herbal medicine

⑤On the road to Qianjidian, tall and thick trees stand sentinel on both sides.

Photos by Chen Changchun

## Dining



### Oktoberfest 2010

Invite your colleagues and friends for a Bavarian celebration at Paulaner Brauhaus, home of the original Oktoberfest in Beijing. The legendary Oktoberfest in Munich, Germany is celebrating its landmark 200th anniversary this September. The capital's beer lovers can get in on the fun at the Kempinski Hotel Beijing. This year, Stephan Interthal, managing director of the Kempinski Hotel Beijing, and Stefan Frank, brew master at Paulaner Brauhaus, will open the tap on the first barrel. Come in for a glass of liquid gold.

Where: Paulaner Brauhaus, Kempinski Hotel Beijing, 40 Liangmaqiao Lu, Chaoyang District

When: October 8-24, 11 am - 1 am next day

Tel: 6410 4212

### Alfa '80s

Celebrate '80s night, Beijing's longest running theme night, every Friday at Alfa! Relive the best of past decades at the newly renovated Alfa by partying to tunes from the '70s, '80s and '90s. Fueled by Alfa's legendary Long Island iced teas, Alfa's Friday is the place to kick off your weekend.

Where: 6 Xingfu Yicun, Chaoyang District  
Tel: 6413 0086



### LIVE, right by your side

Traditional drunken prawns flambeed in Chinese liquor and simmered in their own stock are back at Yao Chi Chinese Restaurant in the Grand Millennium Beijing. Indulge in this Cantonese classic available daily for both lunch and dinner.

Where: Grand Millennium Beijing, 7 Dongsanhuan Zhong Lu, Chaoyang District

Tel: 6530 9383

### Mid-autumn greetings

Mid-autumn festival is the time for reuniting with family and intimate friends. To celebrate this year's festival, Great Wall Sheraton Hotel Beijing has prepared scrumptious packaged mooncakes with 10 flavorful fillings. Enjoy traditional five nuts, black sesame and lotus seed paste fillings, and more exotic ones like birds' nests with olives and deluxe abalone with olives. With six exquisite packages, Autumn Happiness (188 yuan), Autumn Jade (268 yuan), Autumn Luck (238 yuan), Autumn Fortune (288 yuan), Autumn Prosperity (338 yuan) and Autumn Treasure (1118 yuan), any choice is sure to enhance your Mid-Autumn enjoyment.

Where: The Great Wall Sheraton Hotel Beijing, 10 Dongsanhuan Bei Lu, Chaoyang District  
Tel: 6590 5566 ext. 2152

### Mid-Autumn Festival

The Moon Festival remains one of the most popular traditional festivals in China today. The full moon symbolizes a time for reunion, when families meet for a sumptuous meal and enjoy their favorite mooncakes. To celebrate the event, Swissotel Beijing has prepared an enticing array of delicacies for your own reunion. Its three mooncake gift boxes, Joyful Autumn (six cakes), Harmony Moon (eight cakes), Delightful Exquisite (six cakes), include cakes with traditional fillings like red lotus seed and egg yolk, mixed nuts with ham, red bean paste, black sesame paste and jujube and green tea paste.

Where: Swissotel Beijing, 2 Chaoyangmen Bei Dajie, Dongcheng District  
Tel: 6553 2288 ext. 2148



### Celebrate the autumn festival

In celebration of Mid-Autumn Festival, Crowne Plaza Beijing Zhongguancun has specially prepared an array of traditional, sugar-free mooncakes. Each is packaged in auspicious red festive colors that symbolize peace and harmony. The cakes are an ideal gift for friends and business associates on this joyous occasion.

Where: Crowne Plaza Beijing Zhongguancun, 106 Zhichun Lu, Haidian District

Tel: 5993 8888 ext. 2331



### Cheesecakes color the Lobby Lounge

With colorful cheesecakes brightening up the Lobby Lounge, there is no better place to celebrate autumn than the Lobby Lounge. Come for delicious vanilla, banana, praline, mango and chocolate cheesecakes. Indulge in Beijing's most majestic hotel lobby while enjoying Sunday afternoon tea with your Sloane-y friends to classical music performed by a 12-piece orchestra.

Where: China World Hotel, 1 Jianguomen Wai Dajie, Chaoyang District  
Tel: 6505 2266 ext. 37

## Event



### UK glamour girl DJ Lauren Pope

Come party with the UK's top glamour girl DJ Lauren Pope for one night at Zeta Bar. Pope has taken the UK and international club scenes by storm, as testified by her extensive list of celebrity clients and her high profile "royal romance" with Prince Harry. Now on her Asia Tour, Pope is ready to light up Beijing with beauty and music sure to blow you away.

Where: Zeta Bar, Hilton Beijing, 1 Dongfang Lu, Chaoyang District

When: 10 pm onward, September 4  
Cost: 99 yuan per person, includes one drink

Tel: 5865 5050

### Marriott'sustainable farming project

Natural honey from a sustainable farm in Pingwu County is coming soon to Marriott International branded hotel stores in China. The farm is part of a water conservation project called Nobility of Nature, which aids rural farmers in Sichuan Province in introducing businesses which put less stress on the environment. Marriott will invest 3.4 million yuan over the next two years to support the Pingwu Water Conservation Fund as well as other water conservation initiatives in Sichuan. Since the program's inception, the Fund has provided 160,000 yuan to the honey farming programs in the villages of Guanba, Yujiashan and Haoziping, as well as to a solar energy project.

### No-Name Trio

Guitarists Nico Torrese (France) and Daniel Brustman (USA) join with China's foremost accordion player Zoe Wang for an evening of Django-inspired gypsy jazz. The international group based in Beijing specializes in French swing styles of long ago.

Where: 7 Dongmianhua Hutong, Jiaodong Nan Dajie, Dongcheng District  
Tel: 5844 3638

(By Sun Feng)

**Chinglish story**

This column focuses on Chinglish mistakes in our daily life. If you have any experiences to share, send them to Wang Yu at wangyu2008@ynet.com.

# Changing words in the changing world

By Zhang Dongya

Many words' meanings mutate over time, and when an erstwhile innocuous definition turns prurient and risqué, user beware!

I have a recent anecdote to illustrate my point. An ex-colleague of mine named Eric, who now works for a daily newspaper, came calling last week asking to interview an English speaker who is proficient in Chinese. He was working on a story about Chinglish slogans – China may have more slogans than any other countries in the world, a stat only matched by the number of mistranslations of said slogans – and he knew that my company had several qualified individuals who could talk on the subject.

Since it was the busiest day of our workweek – “mad Wednesday” – I initially wanted to reject Eric’s request. But I saw him standing at the door of my office, begging, “I just need a few minutes,” so I grudgingly put him in touch with Derrick, an old China hand and the lead copyeditor at *Beijing Today*.

Derrick took a break from work to fulfill Eric’s request, causing colleagues to get anxious. The copy flow became delayed, and I felt very sorry about it.

Eric’s article came out the next day, along with a thank you from the writer. I passed those regards to Derrick in an email. Still feeling a bit guilty about taking up his time, I used an English idiom I thought might lighten the situation.



“Sorry to disturb you on hump day,” I wrote.

Soon I got this reply: “What is ‘hump day’?”

I remembered the phrase referred to Wednesday, the toughest workday of the week because it fell in the middle, as a “hump” that had to be climbed over.

To my surprise, Derrick told me he had never heard of the phrase, but that it sounded vaguely sexual given the meaning of “hump” as a verb.

Ugh. I’d not thought of this. And

when I tried tracing the phrase’s origins and evolution, I hit a dead end.

Derrick told me that people will understand “hump day” may have much to do with where they are from. While it may be common on the Internet, in southeast Michigan and other parts of the US it is virtually unheard of.

If the 2009 movie *Humpday* is any indicator, this phrase could be changing its meaning very soon.

It just goes to show that even if you master slang, how it is understood by native speakers may still vary greatly.

**Chinglish on the way**

This column aims to identify Chinglish in public areas. If you see any Chinglish signs, please send a picture of it to wangyu2008@ynet.com together with your name and address.

## Strictly Slapstick Chase

By Terry Boyd-Zhang

“Is this an advertisement for a comedian search?” I asked myself when I first saw this sign. “Slapstick” is a type of humor that uses violence and over-the-top illogical situations to win laughter. Slapstick can be seen in the acts of comedians such as Charlie Chaplin, Jim Carrey and Mike Meyers, and in cartoons such as *Tom and Jerry* and *Looney Tunes*. The girl on the sign in the foreground is happy and pensive and the boy beside the small fence in the background, who has lost his pretty hat, is waiting eagerly for his pink balloon to come down so he can hit it again with his nose; they do not seem “slapstick” in the least. What is going on here? *Yajin*, the first two characters, mean “forbidden.” *Zhui*, the third character, is “chase” and *dano*, the last two, mean “to cause trouble.” So let’s plug the thing into *niciku*, an online Chinese-English dictionary: “strictly forbidden (to)



chase or seek a violent, noisy row.” Google translates makes it “non-slapstick chase,” exactly the opposite of where we started. Huh? Over to the native speaker: “Chasing and beating each other is not allowed.” *Niciku* wins over Google on this one! So, if you are in the park and you feel like chasing and beating your children,

but you see this sign, you will have to refrain. Although I believe that chasing your toddler to prevent him or her from playing in traffic would be a valid exception. Another exception might be if you were participating in some type of slapstick routine with your friends. ‘Course, you’d have to be strict about it.

**Blacklist**

This is a column of words or phrases commonly misused by Chinese speakers. If you’re planning to be an English teacher, reporter or employee of a multinational company, then watch out for this page each week.

**1. Though they have very high IQs, they seem to be strangers to modesty.**

**Professor Zhu Shida (ZS):** We often say: He is a stranger to me. It means one does not know another person. Thus we have the phrase “stranger to,” followed by a pronoun or a noun. When it means a person out of place or not at home in something, we express it this way: He is strange to the work but will soon learn. It means he is not accustomed to or is unfamiliar with the work. Based on this pattern, it evolves into “no stranger to.” He is no stranger to hard work. You see it is followed by a noun. It means that he is fairly accustomed to or fairly familiar with the work. Anyway, the sample sentence should read: Though they have very high IQs, they seem to be strangers to modesty. It means that they know nothing about how to be modest.

**Terry Boyd-Zhang (TBZ):** “He is a stranger to me” is also something you say about someone you have broken a relationship with. An arrogant person who brags about how vastly superior in intelligence he or she is to you, for example, may be one you would eventually discontinue any relationship with, treating them as if they were a stranger to you.

**2. The renminbi will rub shoulder with the dollar and the euro one day.**

**ZS:** It is fairly difficult for a beginner to make clear phrases involving “shoulder.” Sometimes it is in a singular form and at others it is plural. In this case, we have to say “rub shoulders with” which means: to mingle with, rub elbows with, be on par with or be equal to. I have an example from Vladimir Nabokov: Never have we rubbed shoulders with as many celebrities. So, here we have to say: The renminbi will rub shoulders with the dollar and the euro one day. However, when it comes to the phrase “give the cold shoulder to,” it is in the singular form. Don’t be confused. We usually say: She gives the cold shoulder to her suitor. You never say: She gives the cold shoulders to her suitor. We have another example from the *International Herald Tribune*: Teachers’ unions give the cold shoulder to the Obama administration.

**TBZ:** There are several expressions with “shoulder” or “shoulders” in English, as mentioned above. Some other expressions include: shoulder to shoulder (meaning “showing solidarity”), put one’s shoulder to the wheel (“to get to work – and hard!”) and stand head and shoulders above (“taller than everyone else” (literally) or “better than everyone else” (figuratively)). Be careful though – don’t overuse such expressions or your teacher might start to find you clichéd!

**3. Slacks**

**ZS:** We often read sports reports in Western newspapers about fans wearing slacks in the bleachers. The word reportedly is a corporate coinage. The Haggar clothing company asserts that in the 1940s, the Haggars, working with ad-man Morris Hite, deliberately coined the word “slacks,” so-called because they were to be worn during leisurely “slack time.” However, the Haggars could not get the patent for this term. According to the Oxford English Dictionary, this word dates to 1824 when slacks started to be worn, meaning “loosely cut trousers for informal wear.” Now, in English dictionaries, we have an explanation of slacks as “trousers for casual wear.” Also, it still has something to do with its original meaning of “loose, careless, slow and sluggish.” “Slacks” is another example of linguistic evolution over time.

**TBZ:** Very interesting! We have slacks, trousers, pants, jeans, cords ... then variations like harem pants, hammer pants, tunic pants, pajama pants, hot pants, flood pants ... as you can see, I prefer the word “pants,” but “slacks” is fine, too. I think that “pants” is perhaps more general (something long you wear on the bottom) and I feel “slacks” are dressier, more like what you would wear to work (or to church), if you weren’t wearing a dress or a skirt.

# After Life (2009)

## Movie of the week

*After Life* is a clever psychological thriller with a creepy and mysterious atmosphere. While its core concept is strong, it's the execution that makes this movie shine.

The key question of *After Life* is whether lead actress Anna is alive or dead. The film bats back and forth delivering clues both subtle and blunt.

Even though the film tries to maintain some ambiguity, the ending is still quite obvious. But the adventure along the way will drive you crazy – in a good way.

The film poses some interesting questions regarding the nature of life, forcing the viewer to reflect on his own existence.

## Synopsis

After a horrific car accident, Anna wakes up to find the local funeral director, Eliot Deacon, preparing her body to be laid out. Confused, terrified and feeling still very much alive, Anna doesn't believe she's dead, despite the funeral director's reassurances that she is merely in transition to the afterlife. Eliot convinces her he has the ability to communicate with the dead and is the only one who can help her. Trapped inside the funeral home, with nobody to turn to except Eliot, Anna is forced to face her deepest fears and accept her own death.

## Scene 1:

### At a restaurant

(Paul decides to propose to Anna at dinner.)

**Paul Coleman (P):** You look tired, dear.

**Anna Taylor (A):** No, no, I'm fine. Everything's fine. I'm so sorry.

**P:** You scared the life out of (1) me.

**A:** I'm sorry.

**P:** Oh! Your hair.

**A:** Do you not like it?

**P:** No, I didn't say that. It's just very ... it's very red. Not really you, is it?

**A:** Are you ready to order?

**P:** Yes. We'll have the duck, please.

**A:** Paul. You always have the duck here.

**P:** I don't always have the duck.

(Anna looks at the menu.)

**A:** I'll have the duck.

**Waiter:** Yes, ma'am.

**P:** The duck's very good. Listen, let's try not to fight tonight, OK?

**A:** OK. What are we drinking? Oh yes, all right. It's good. And it has a very expensive-looking label. What's the special occasion?

**P:** There's something I really need to talk to you about, about us. I've been offered a transfer to the head office in Chicago. It's gonna mean a lot more work, of course a lot of responsibility and a lot of changes, but it's an incredible opportunity and I'd be crazy to turn it down (2). So I'm thinking maybe it's time for us to ...

(Paul is about to bring out the proposal ring.)

**A:** You're leaving me.

**P:** What?

**A:** You could have told me this morning. You didn't have to buy me off (3) with this expensive dinner.

**P:** Anna, wait.

**A:** No. You told me everything was gonna be OK.

**P:** Don't be ridiculous. Anna, you've got it all wrong.

**A:** I'm not being ridiculous.

**P:** Jesus Christ, can we get through one meal without arguing?

**A:** No. No.

**P:** Please, just one meal!

**A:** Apparently we can't. Apparently I'm not capable of that.

**P:** Maybe you aren't. I'm beginning to wonder ...

**A:** Fuck you.

**P:** Please, everyone's watching. Don't do this.

**A:** Fuck you!

**P:** You're ... you're crazy. You're just like your god-damn mother.

**A:** I am nothing like my mother.

(Anna stands up and is about to leave.)

**P:** You know, I'm not running after you, Anna. God! Shit.

## Vocabulary

1. **scare the life out of:** to terrify or surprise
2. **turn down:** to refuse or reject a request
3. **buy someone off:** here it means to bribe
4. **attendant physician:** an attending physician who supervises an emergency
5. **step out:** to leave briefly
6. **pull some strings:** to use one's influence

(By Huang Daohen)



## Scene 2:

### At the funeral home

(Anna dies in a car accident and is brought to the funeral home.)

**Anna Taylor (A):** Where am I?

**Eliot Deacon (E):** You're in a funeral home. You're dead. You were in a car accident. You hit a truck loaded with metal pipes.

**A:** I'm not dead.

**E:** You were pronounced dead eight hours ago. Your blood no longer circulates through your body. Your brain cells are slowly dying. Your body's already decomposing.

**A:** I'm not dead.

**E:** This is your death certificate. Cause of death, massive internal trauma. Time of death: 8:23 p.m. You were dead on arrival. The attendant physician (4) signed here at 9:45 last night. I'm sorry.

**A:** What's happening? Why can't I move? Don't touch me. Why are you touching me?

**E:** I'm preparing your body. You have to look beautiful for your funeral.

**A:** But I'm not dead.

**E:** You all say the same thing. Maybe you should rest now.

**A:** Oh my God. I can't be dead. This must be a nightmare. Oh, God, wake up. Wake up!

## Scene 3:

### At the police station

(Paul comes up to Tom, the police captain, asking to see Anna.)

**Policeman (Police):** Mr. Coleman, I heard about your girlfriend. I'm sorry.

**Paul Coleman (P):** Is Tom in?

**Police:** The captain just stepped out (5). He won't be long. You can wait in his office if you want.

**P:** Um, no, thanks. I'll just grab a drink.

(Paul goes to grab a drink and sees Anna's crashed car.)

**Tom (T):** Are you OK?

**P:** Yeah. No, I'm fine. I'm fine.

**T:** I just found out. I'm so sorry, man. Look, if there's anything you need at all ...

**P:** I need to see Anna.

**T:** What do you mean?

**P:** The funeral director said I couldn't see her because I wasn't family. Please talk to him, Tom. You know, pull some strings (6) or show him your badge or something.

**T:** I can't do that, Paul.

**P:** I fucked up, man.

**T:** Are you sure you're OK?

**P:** Huh? Yeah. I always fuck everything up.

